



## **Next Step Operating Instructions: INTRODUCTION**

- These Operating Instructions are the 'rules' within which the service operates. They should be made available to all advisers and staff across the service.
- These Operating Instructions should be used as a reference document for all aspects of service delivery. They will help to ensure we have a consistent customer offer across all channels.
- The Operating Instructions are not public facing. The use of language and terminology used in this document is directed to staff working in the Next Step service. Care should be taken that all communications with customers are clear and customer friendly avoiding the use of abbreviations or acronyms.
- Throughout this document we have referred to Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the Telephone channel. However, often in common parlance, when we refer to Prime Contractors we are also including the Contractor for the Telephone channel.
- The Operating Instructions will eventually sit on the Adviser Portal of the website but for the time being will be available on the Next Step Team Site.
- These Operating Instructions will be reviewed and updated as the Service beds down over time.



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## 1. Operating Instructions: Policy context

1. In establishing a new integrated adult careers service John Hayes MP, Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, said:

*“We need to give people of all ages the opportunities to enrich their lives and succeed, so it is vitally important that everyone gets the help and support they need to make career choices.*

*“By integrating adult careers services, we are building a more responsive system that will provide all the information and tools people need in one place, making it easier and quicker for all users to get the right information and support for them.”*

2. Geoff Russell, Skills Funding Agency Chief Executive said:

*“The vision is for millions of people to enjoy more rewarding lives. We want to create a culture where career development and acquiring new skills is the norm. This will improve individuals’ lives, society as a whole and in turn increase productivity and boost the economy”*

3. The integrated adult careers service will be known as Next Step and will consist of three integrated channels (web, phone and face-to-face) operating under one brand, name and telephone number and underpinned by a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. It will be a universal service providing personal, relevant advice on getting on in work and life to any adult aged 19 and over (or 18 and over for Jobcentre Plus customers or those in custody).
4. The service will provide access to better information about the labour market and new tools to help adults at any stage in their lives make the right choices about skills, careers and qualifications and plan their career development; a new professional development framework for careers advisers and will be visible through the Next Step brand to raise the service’s appeal to the public.
5. Within the web channel, registration for Next Step will provide a secure personalised space that gives customers access to the online tools and services; empowering them to manage their own learning and career development and provide increased information for the service to provide further benefit to the customer.



## 2. Operating Instructions: Brand

**Full brand guidelines are available on the Skills Funding Agency's Campaign Resources website – <http://www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/campaignresources>**

We believe everyone has the ability to develop and grow in their working lives...but things often get in the way, hold people back and suppress their potential. Our job is to remove the barriers.

We exist to 'Fuel the Potential' of millions of adults and the experts that support them.

To do this, we must inspire by being positive and deliver by making it possible.

### Our VALUES

We must be ENTHUSIASTIC: Positive energy is infectious, it inspires and motivates.

We must be EXPERT: We need to know our stuff to deliver high-quality, effective information and advice.

We must be IMPARTIAL: We only ever act in the best interests of our customers.

We must be PRAGMATIC: Our aim is to get the job done. The right outcome is more important than the right process.

### Our VISION

For millions of individuals to enjoy more rewarding working lives; and to create a culture where career development and acquiring new skills is the norm.

This will improve the lives of individuals, society as a whole and in turn increase productivity and boost the economy.

### Our MISSION

To give everyone access to the best information, advice and resources that help them make more effective skills, careers, work and life choices.

### SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Next Step is a service that gives everyone access to the best information, advice and resources to make more effective choices about skills, careers, work and life.

### Our brand SUMMARY: In 60 seconds

The integrated adult careers service will be launched in August. It will be available to all adults in England, whatever their prior skills or employment status – fuelling the potential of millions of people.

Customers will be able to choose to use the service online, by telephone or face-to-face. Whichever channel they use, they will experience the same high quality service.



To make this happen, the service has been designed around a central principle:

- That the customer's needs shape the service that is delivered and
- That advisers take responsibility for continuity and quality.

Customers will benefit from expert, impartial advice which reflects labour market intelligence. They will also be able to make an informed choice about where they learn by having access to user-friendly information on courses and providers, including how successful previous learners have been at progressing into further learning and employment.

The online channel of the new service will integrate these sources of information, so that an individual can see in one place all that they need to make a personal choice about how to move forwards in work and life.

Those who require more support to understand and make use of this information can speak to an adviser in person or on the telephone.

People receiving out of work benefits who need skills training to move into sustainable employment will be referred to the service by Jobcentre Plus.

We will continue to develop and enhance the service beyond August. By building strong networks rooted in local communities, we will help individuals tackle all the barriers they face to getting on in learning, work and life.

### STYLE

The way our brand speaks is a bit like David Attenborough, full of energy, enthusiasm and possibilities. It's a voice we respect and listen to. One that educates and informs by involving us, rather than talking at us. We talk as equals. With respect.

We're straightforward. Never clever for clever's sake, or overly poetic.

We shun technical words, but that doesn't mean we dumb things down. We simply ensure that what we say is super clear and as easy as possible to understand.

Our words, like our service, are practical and useful.

See the **Brand Guidelines** for our 6 rules to speaking in the Next Step way.



## Our brand ELEMENTS

See the **Brand Guidelines** for our brand elements:

- Logo
- The Path
- Imagery
- Typography
- Colour

## LOGO

Our logo comes in four variations:

A version with our service descriptor as a lock-in, a left and right hand version without a lock-in and a version for use when a service descriptor is needed but space is at a premium.

A service description should always be used on examples where the audience could be engaging with the brand without previous knowledge of the service.  
E.g.: press and TV advertising, store fascias, or leaflets in doctors' surgeries.

However, in instances where the audience understand the brand offer and service, then the service descriptor is no longer required e.g. on the website, in-store graphics or any correspondence with registered users.

## The PATH

The Path is a device which gives our brand dynamism and cut-through. It can be used to hold copy, frame an image or simply add a memorable graphic quality to our communications.

## IMAGERY

Our brand exists to fuel the potential of millions and imagery is a great way to illustrate the positive impact we can have on people. To do this we must show people on their own journey to self improvement and communicate that personal development is both a positive thing and possible to achieve.

## TYPOGRAPHY

Bliss is our primary typeface.

It should be used for all printed communications, signage, fascias and with the exception of online any externally produced on-screen applications (TV ads, corporate videos, information videos etc.)

Calibri is the secondary typeface.

We use this on all internally produced communications (PowerPoint, office notices, etc.)

Verdana is the typeface we use exclusively for online.



### COLOUR

We have a colour palette containing 5 colour groups, each consisting of a primary and secondary colour. Also in the palette are black for use in body copy and white which is an important element in retaining the contemporary freshness of our brand.

### DUAL branding

Our Next Step products or services must be fully branded as Next Step, using all the elements outlined in the brand guidelines. No dual branding of Next Step services is permitted, with the exception of the European Social Fund and approved government partners.

Products or services made available or merchandised through Next Step should retain their own brand identity e.g. Apprenticeships

Referral agencies e.g. Jobcentre Plus can use the Next Step logo on appropriate materials. This type of use should be agreed and signed off by the Communications Team at the Skills Funding Agency.

### LOCATIONS

There are generally 4 types of location where the Next Step Service is provided:

- Contact centre
- Permanent
- Temporary
- Referral

#### Contact Centre

Our Next Step products or services must be fully branded as Next Step, using all the elements outlined in the brand guidelines.

Appropriate Next Step templates including promotional items and stationery must be used.

All scripts and guidance for advisers must fully reflect the Next Step Values, Vision, Mission, and Style.

#### Permanent: Locations where Next Step is delivered all the time.

Our Next Step products or services must be fully branded as Next Step, using all the elements outlined in the brand guidelines.

Appropriate Next Step templates including promotional items, stationery and signage must be used. Visible, comprehensive and permanent external and internal signage is essential.



Our advisers must use branded materials and wear Next Step name badges.

Temporary: Locations where Next Step is delivered some of the time

Our Next Step products or services must be fully branded as Next Step, using all the elements outlined in the brand guidelines.

Appropriate Next Step templates including promotional items, stationery and signage must be used. Visible, comprehensive, temporary external and internal signage is essential.

Our advisers must use branded materials and wear Next Step name badges.

TEMPLATES

A series of templates is available in PDF format on the Skills Funding Agency Campaign Resource site

<http://www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/campaignresources>

- Brand reference sheet
- Calling card
- Business card
- Comp slip Letterhead template
- Powerpoint template
- Word template
- Name badge
- Note pad
- Post-it notes
- Appointment card
- Table wrap
- Pen template
- Strut card
- Window decal 30 cm<sup>2</sup>
- Window decal 1m<sup>2</sup>
- Door sign
- Empty belly poster
- Generic leaflet
- Generic poster
- Generic pop-up banner

The Skills Funding Agency Communications and Campaign team can provide brand advice





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### 3. Operating Instructions: The Service Offer

1. The integrated adult careers service will be a single integrated service with three delivery channels (web, telephone and face-to-face) operating under one brand and shaped by local partnerships and innovative ways of working.
2. The service will provide a universal offer, for all those in and out of work. It will provide targeted support focusing on people with specific barriers to getting into and on in work.
3. One of the objectives of the service is to build lifelong relationships with its customers, to encourage them to use the service throughout their lives and not just in times of crisis.
4. The integrated adult careers service will help people find the right combination of advice for them, reflecting their specific needs to help them progress in work and life. It will:
  - provide personalised relevant advice on getting on in work and life, reflecting individual needs and situations;
  - enable customers to manage their own careers and provide the appropriate level of support to meet their needs;
  - be available for any adult aged 19 and over (or 18 and over for Jobcentre Plus customers or those in custody). See Working with Offenders section for further detail of how Prime Contractors will work with Offenders.
  - allow people, who require more intensive, ongoing support, to get that support on the basis of their need
5. The service will work closely with Jobcentre Plus and other partners such as those delivering careers services to young people, those working with offenders, Further education, Local Authorities and Higher Education.

#### An integrated offer

6. The service will be delivered through three channels. These are:
  - A national website - available to individuals via self service and mediated through an adviser
  - A national contact centre providing support through telephone, email and web forums. The national telephone number is 0800 100 900
  - A regional and local face-to-face channel providing access to advisers at venues local to individuals.

7. All Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the Telephone channel must work together to form a truly integrated and improved offer to individuals. The three channels of the service will be integrated by:
  - applying the single brand and telephone number provided by the Skills Funding Agency and Department for Business Innovation and Skills( BIS);
  - use of a single national telephone number
  - the availability of consistent web based tools and providing a personalised offer that takes account of the customer profile along with their need and adviser assessment (self directed through the web)
  - using a common customer relationship management system
  - seamless customer journeys through the service between web, telephone and face-to-face channels; and
  - applying common workforce standards, processes, procedures, technology and training across the service.

### Target Audience

8. The service is available to all people in England aged 19 and over (or 18 and over for Jobcentre Plus customers or those in custody)
9. National priority groups have also been identified and customers within these groups are able to receive ongoing face-to-face support through additional sessions with an adviser. Customers who fall outside these priority groups can access additional advice sessions via the telephone and web (virtual adviser) channels.
10. The priority groups are:
  - low-skilled adults (i.e. without a full level 2 qualification, especially women) who are locked in low-skilled, low-prospects jobs
  - young adults aged 19-24 without a level 3 qualification
  - Adults facing redundancy, newly redundant or at a distance from the labour market
  - Jobcentre Plus customers in receipt of out-of-work benefits
  - people from ethnic minority communities
  - adults aged 50 plus
  - carers<sup>1</sup> as defined by Department of Health guidelines
  - offenders in custody and in the community under the supervision of probation services and ex-offenders

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<sup>1</sup> A carer spends a significant proportion of their life providing unpaid support to family or, potentially, friends. This could be caring for a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems (this definition is subject to review and consultation)

- people with a self-declared learning difficulty or disability (including those with mental health conditions).

## Priority Objectives for the Service

11. The priority objectives of the service are to:

- deliver a service which is fully integrated and seamless between the face-to-face, telephone and web delivery channels and which signposts and refers individuals to these channels according to individual needs
- deliver a high quality and personalised service that provides information, advice and support on skills, careers and learning opportunities to customers
- provide skills assessment services to individuals with identified skills needs who have either been referred by other agencies or self-referred. This will include the production of a Skills Action Plan.
- use a range of products and tools to support the delivery of personalised, up to date information and advice on careers and skills
- support national and regional marketing strategies and assist customers in getting the information they need.

## Support and level of service available

12. The service will provide - either through a careers adviser (face-to-face, by telephone or email via the web) or by self-service through the web channel - a range of support described in the table below.

Support Available	Description
General information/Careers and skills generic information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ General information about the service– for example how the service can help or support finding information on the website</li> <li>▪ General (not personalised for a specific customer) information about careers and skills</li> <li>▪ Personal skills assessment/audit, with the aid of IT-based tools</li> <li>▪ Information relating to a campaign such as 'Our Future. It's in our hands'.</li> <li>▪ Links to Jobcentre Plus to provide information on specific job opportunities</li> <li>▪ Ability to book telephone or face-to-face careers and skills advice sessions</li> <li>▪ Course search</li> <li>▪ Job profiles</li> <li>▪ Help with using IT-based tools</li> </ul>

Specialist Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tailored careers and skills advice which can be provided via the telephone and face-to-face for example: information for those facing redundancy, or returning to work following a planned absence</li> <li>This also includes referrals out to partners and specialist advice services, for example community health specialists, or benefits rights and entitlements</li> </ul>
Personalised advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personalised service, which results in an action plan with agreed follow-ups</li> <li>Advice regarding skills and interests, CV help,</li> <li>Detailed skills assessment</li> <li>Confidence building and empowerment</li> <li>One-off assessment or multiple sessions based on customer need</li> <li>The ability to register with Next Step and set up a personalised online space</li> </ul>

13. The service will support a broad range of customers' needs which are set out in the table below. Many customers will have a combination of these needs and will need a range of services to be delivered to help them progress.

Component	Description
Develop my career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advice to help a customer choose or change career</li> <li>Providing up-to-date national, regional and local, sector labour market information</li> <li>Detailed careers information such as qualifications and skills required for roles</li> </ul>
Improve my skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing personalised skills assessment and advice on how to find and access learning</li> <li>Advice to find and enrol on a course</li> <li>Access to information on provider quality</li> <li>Support in registering for Next Step</li> </ul>
Job readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equipping customers to successfully apply for a job</li> <li>Example tools: CV builder / Interview advice / Local labour market information</li> <li>Links to Jobcentre Plus</li> </ul>
Funding and eligibility advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information and advice related to funding or eligibility for funding</li> <li>Information and advice on Learner Support programmes and Child Care and Career Development Loans</li> </ul>
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specialist help, advice and referrals to partners and specialist advice services e.g. returning to work such as Citizens Advice Bureau, housing associations, childcare, legal advice, debt advice</li> </ul>

## How the service is personalised

14. The service offer to individuals depends on the profile of the customer and an individual adviser assessment (self directed on the web) of their situation and the outcome needed. A customer could have an initial session or multiple sessions and they could use one delivery channel or a mixture - it all depends on their profile, need and preference.
15. The level of personalisation will also depend on the amount of information the customer provides. The more information that is provided, the richer, more personal, specific advice/support can be given. At all levels of service help and advice can still be provided but it will not be as rich and not all information will be saved to create a history.
16. The following table provides a view of how customers can access the service at differing levels in order to personalise the support that they receive. There are different features of the service available to customers through public browsing and full registration, whereas full registration is achieved through registering for Next Step on the web or creation of a CRM record by an adviser.

Public Browsing	Full Registration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ General browsing on the web site</li> <li>▪ Picking up a leaflet from a face-to-face adviser or key partners</li> <li>▪ Asking for general information when calling the telephone channel</li> <li>▪ Case study &amp; brief description of entitlements</li> <li>▪ Careers &amp; Job Information</li> <li>▪ Latest news</li> <li>▪ Videos / Audio</li> <li>▪ Promotional material</li> <li>▪ Course search (Course Directory)</li> <li>▪ Access to LMI</li> <li>▪ Eligibility checker for learner support</li> <li>▪ Ability to create an action plan, (via web channel)</li> <li>▪ Statement of eligibility for government funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Customer record via the CRM is created/exists (when the customer contacts the telephone or face-to-face channels or sends an email via the web channel).</li> <li>▪ Full customer details and shared secrets captured to support on-going interventions across telephone and face-to-face channels</li> <li>▪ Access to advice via the telephone or face-to-face channels</li> <li>▪ Full Skills Action Plan saved (via telephone &amp; face-to-face channels when receiving an advice session)</li> <li>▪ Supports cross referrals between telephone and face-to-face channels</li> <li>▪ Next Step registration created/exists for personalised online space</li> <li>▪ Customer can save searches and functions</li> </ul>

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No activity from using the web channel saved (e.g. searches and functions such as CV)</li> <li>▪ A limited customer record can be created (anonymous)</li> <li>▪ Demographics data captured in CRM when accessing the telephone and face-to-face channels (anonymous)</li> <li>▪ An enquiry can be logged in CRM and is managed as an intervention</li> <li>▪ Access to information</li> </ul> | <p>such as CV builder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Encourages more self-help</li> <li>▪ Full skills action plan saved</li> <li>▪ Creating and storing personal details generated through the skills diagnostic tool and saved searches (e.g. from course searches)</li> <li>▪ Skills assessment report saved from skills diagnostic tool</li> <li>▪ Customer can provide a user name and password to access forums (via the web channel).</li> </ul> |
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17. When delivering the service, advisers must:

- create a customer record through the customer relationship management (CRM) system
- encourage customers to register for Next Step to allow them to manage their own careers as appropriate
- clearly outline the offer, access points, types and level of service available
- signpost or refer to other channels
- ensure the service is consistent across face-to-face and telephone channels. A customer can self-serve using tools and information on the web
- enable the customer (with adviser support as appropriate) to personalise/use the service to meet their need.

### **Face-to-face channel offer**

18. The face-to-face channel will be delivered on a sessional basis. All adults aged 19 and over (and 18 year olds who are Jobcentre Plus customers or in custody) can access a free careers and skills advice session from a careers adviser. Adults who are in one or more of the priority groups set out in paragraph 10 will be entitled to access multiple sessions to address their career and skills needs.

19. The Prime Contractor for the face-to-face channel must:

- ensure that adults receive labour-market focused careers and skills advice that helps them to progress into learning and or work and sustainable employment and ultimately realise their career ambitions.
- provide (where appropriate) additional and ongoing careers and skills advice for priority customer groups (as defined by national and regional

priorities) to help their progression into training and sustainable employment.

- ensure flexible delivery arrangements through a range of locations, and outlets supported by strong partnership working which may include signposting and referrals to other channels.
- ensure all adults have access to a free careers and skills advice session from a qualified adviser that includes;
  - a diagnosis of careers and skills needs
  - provision of initial advice on actions to be taken in the context of their careers and skills goals and the labour market
  - agreement of careers and skills goals for the short and medium term.
  - access to other services including registration for Next Step to provide a personalised online space,
  - referral to learning or other appropriate provision and job search support.
  - information on access to further face-to-face sessions (for those in priority groups or paying for services) and careers and skills advice through the telephone and web channels.
- ensure that adults in the specified national priority groups set out in paragraph 10 are entitled to additional free sessions. These sessions may include:
  - further detailed advice and support
  - identification of personal careers and skills goals and targets
  - A skills and career assessment using the skills diagnostic tool (SDT).
  - agreement with customers on one or more interventions or referrals to learning and skills provision, specialist provision for those affected by the economic downturn or other support to help overcome barriers to entering learning and sustainable employment.
  - support for learning brokerage, career progression and/or job search.

20. Individuals outside of the priority groups who require additional support beyond the initial face-to-face session have the following support available to them.

- Accessing further fully funded support via the telephone channel
- Use of the web channel to access a range of tools and services
- Paying for further face-to-face support where the contracted provider offers a fee-based service. Any fee charged to the individual should not exceed the funding provided by the Skills Funding Agency ; or
- Using another face-to-face provider of their choice for further specific support with charges agreed between the individual and the provider.



21. Prime Contractors will also be able to inform individuals about specialist fee-charging services which may be useful to them.

#### **Access to the face-to-face channel**

22. Access to the face-to-face channel will be through a range of flexible delivery mechanisms. It is a requirement that the Prime Contractor ensures the customers have access to the service in a way that meets their particular needs.

23. Access arrangements should include:

- individual one to one sessions that meets the need of the customer.
- outreach advisers and activities
- drop-in workshops e.g. for job search support
- customised careers and skills advice programmes (with specific groups)
- partnership delivery with Jobcentre Plus and community based organisations
- links with learning and training providers including informal adult learning; and
- Links with employer facing support (including skills brokers) and Union Learning Representatives

24. Arrangements could also include;

- Imaginative use of tools and resources (e.g. webcams)- however customers requiring telephone or email advice should be signposted or referred to other channels
- Group activities which provide value for money if appropriate for customers; and
- Drop in workshops e.g. for jobsearch support

25. In order to encourage access and use of the service it is a requirement that the Prime Contractor for the face-to-face channel ensures that the face-to-face channel is visible through:

- identifiable 'access points' around the region;
- presence at local and regional events;
- co-location with Jobcentre Plus and a range of other organisations including probation;
- collaborative initiatives with community and partner organisations;
- outreach activities including adviser visits, 'surgeries' and group activities

26. Prime Contractors must offer flexible hours of operation to meet demand and customer need. This includes delivering the service to meet the needs of external organisations including employers in redundancy situations.
27. Prime Contractors must ensure arrangements are in place to receive calls through a single Prime Contractor contact point from the telephone channel to enable a seamless transfer of customers wanting to book a face-to-face session. As a minimum these arrangements should be available Monday to Friday 09.00 hours to 17.00 hours (excluding bank holidays).
28. In instances where customers contact the telephone channel for a face-to-face appointment and the office is closed, information will be queued in the CRM for the Prime Contractor to follow up on the next working day (within 24 hours of the call).
29. Prime Contractors must ensure that there is comprehensive coverage of the face-to-face channel across the whole of the geographical area that the contract covers.
30. This must take into account of:
  - those communities where web access might be limited or restricted
  - where use of the telephone may be a barrier
  - the needs of employed people who will require access to services out-of-hours i.e. at evenings and weekends.
31. Prime Contractors must also ensure access to specialist services for all customers either through the knowledge and expertise of their delivery network or through signposting and referral on to other specialist agencies. Prime Contractors are expected to provide access to the following areas:
  - financial advice linked to job or career change;
  - HE access and funding advice;
  - learner support advice (including funding, childcare and travel);
  - benefits rights and entitlements;
  - specialist advice for specific groups (e.g. offenders/ex-offenders)
  - migrant workers;
  - support for redundancy;
  - pre-retirement support;
  - sector specific labour market advice;
  - advice on obtaining qualifications (particularly through the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).
  - regional and local advice services (in particular, financial and housing, childcare support);
  - community health specialists

## **The Telephone Channel offer**

### **Information**

32. Through 0800 100 900, the telephone channel will provide free, impartial information including covering:

- provision of general careers and course information, including:
  - awareness raising of a customer's entitlement to funded learning that leads to the achievement of specified qualifications
  - support in registering for Next Step to provide a personalised online space for customers
  - provision of more detailed careers information such as qualifications and skills required for job roles, funding advice, returning to work, childcare etc.
- skills assessment and diagnosis of customer need with the aid of IT-based diagnostic tools
- Appointment booking for advice sessions either via telephone or face-to-face (once a customer has been identified as being appropriate for this type of support according to customer need and profile)
- signposting to the web channel of the integrated adult careers service and /or other agencies/organisations as appropriate, such as Citizens Advice, debt advice agencies and legal advice
- handling of any complaints concerning the service or advice provided (according to an agreed complaints process)

33. For all customers accessing information a customer record must be created on the CRM system that includes summary of the discussions that take place.

### **Advice**

34. The advice service is an enriched offer that builds on the information service for customers who have more complex needs or require skills assessment activity. Delivery of additional telephone advice sessions is not dependent on customers being included in one of the priority groups for the service.

- An adviser will assist a customer during the first advice session and together they will create an action plan
- Upon agreement with the customer, the adviser will then call back up to three times to see how they are progressing against their skills action plan and to provide further motivational support
- Individuals using the advice service will benefit from an in-depth discussion with a suitably qualified adviser around moving into work,



career change or in-work progression and resulting in an agreed skills action plan and possibly multiple interventions.

35. When customers are referred to the advice tier of the telephone channel every effort will be made to ensure that all calls can be referred immediately. Where this is not possible, advice sessions should take place within 24 hours of the initial call with the information service unless the customer requests otherwise.

### **Language Line Services**

36. The telephone channel will provide;

- The core services in Gujarati, Punjabi, Sylheti, Urdu, Farsi, Polish, French, Somali are all open Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm except for Punjabi and Urdu which is open 9am – 8pm
- Translation support for advice calls via a 3-way conversation between language line adviser, English-speaking in-depth adviser and the customer
- A service where advisers will contact learning providers to assist in booking customers onto courses
- A community liaison adviser who:
  - Visits outreach organisations to drive up demand for the service within communities
  - Is supported by a team of quality advisers who quality assure the services provided (this function is subject to review as a minimum on an annual basis).
  - Makes contact with each face-to-face region a minimum of twice a year.

37. Further information on the role of the community liaison adviser will be made available in due course.

38. The telephone numbers for language line services are available in the Ways of Working section of these Operating Instructions or the Next Step web-site.

### **Partnerships, Helplines and Campaigns**

39. The Contractor for the telephone channel will provide responses and fulfilment services for specific campaigns usually related to learning and skills.
40. Campaigns and Partnership arrangements are brokered by Skills Funding Agency and are the outcome of relationships with partners such as Sector Skills Councils, Broadcasters (e.g. BBC), and stakeholders such as Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and other government departments.

41. The campaign/partner services will run similarly to the information service. They will provide free, impartial information or advice for specific campaigns relating to learning, skills and/or work.
42. Some campaigns use the main Next Step number 0800 100 900. Some campaigns, such as support for Jobcentre Plus customers currently require a dedicated telephone number and CRM script.
43. The Contractor will put in place an appropriate structure for managing the knowledge required for campaigns and generating the MI reports required.

### **Services to support campaigns**

44. Requests will come from customers telephoning a campaign service or the core service. All requests must be fulfilled within a maximum of 4 working days on receipt of the order. In addition, other services required will include;
  - Providing adequate stock storage facilities, stock reports and audit.
  - Providing packaging materials if required
  - Set up of daily and weekly reports, and provision of summary reports
  - Set up and maintenance of email facilities to support campaigns
  - Data capture requests received by email
  - Data items to be received in various formats; i.e. batch file (flat file –CSV (Comma Separated Values) or other via ftp (File Transfer Protocol)
45. The Contractor will manage messaging to support campaign responses and the core service. The messaging must ensure that during busy periods or out of hours, customers are offered alternatives to queuing for an adviser.

### **Web Channel**

46. The web channel will act as a virtual careers adviser and will replicate the offer available through the telephone or face-to-face channels. The web channel will be accessed directly by customers to allow the customer to self-serve a range of online tools and services.
47. Through the web channel individuals will be able to:
  - Register for Next Step to create a personalised online space that includes storing documents
  - set their career and life goals and aspirations



- understand their starting point in terms of the skills and personal attributes they have and what they need to do to meet their needs and ambitions.
- make informed choices using the tools and information available.
- undergo a skills assessment
- produce their own action plan
- create and save a CV; and
- be supported to use the information effectively and understand the best route to achieving their goals.

### **Telephone channel to face-to-face**

1. Advisers for the telephone channel must always make customers aware of the face-to-face service and discussion should include reference to the local services being available.
2. The Prime Contractor must ensure arrangements are in place to receive calls from the telephone channel so that there is a seamless transfer of customers wanting to book a face-to-face session.
3. The telephone number for each Prime Contractor will not be public facing but will only be used by telephone contact centre staff to make contact with the face-to-face channel. This can include the warm transfer of customers to book the appointment themselves.
4. As a minimum these arrangements should be available at the face-to-face service Monday to Friday 09.00 hours to 17.00 hours (excluding bank holidays). See Hours of Operation section.
5. When advisers contact the telephone channel for a face-to-face appointment and the office of the face-to-face Prime Contractor is closed, then tasks will be queued in the CRM for the Prime Contractor to follow up on the next working day. Details held in the queuing system will include contact details and the reason for the enquiry. The customer will then be contacted directly by the face-to-face service
6. For Jobcentre Plus customers the following arrangements will apply:
  - Jobcentre Plus advisers will signpost their customers to Next Step using the national telephone number 0800 100 900
  - Jobcentre Plus advisers wanting to book a face-to-face appointment should telephone 08000 924 429.



- However, in co-located offices if a Next Step Advisers is available the Jobcentre Plus adviser can refer the customer for an immediate appointment if the adviser is free or an appointment can be booked directly through the CRM system.
- Where engagement activity is taking place e.g. jobsfairs, advisers can book appointments directly through the CRM without going through the telephone channel

### **Face-to-face to telephone channel**

7. Customers must always be made aware of the telephone channel and discussion should include information on the extended opening hours of the telephone channel and ongoing service offer. The amount and type of use the customer makes of the telephone channel will be driven by customer choice and needs. All customers can make use of the telephone channel at any point in the service.
8. Particular examples of when customers may need or choose to make use of the telephone channel might include, if they cannot easily travel to a face-to-face location, when they have exhausted their entitlement to the funded face-to-face offer or when they fall outside the priority group for additional free face-to-face advice sessions.
9. Customers may use the information and advice services of the telephone channel as many times as they wish

### **Face-to-face to web channel**

10. All face-to-face advisers must make customers aware of the web channel and service offer available on the web, including the ability to use web channel at any time. This may also be included as a resource in the Skills Action Plan.
11. The customer can always choose to use the web channel and should be encouraged to do so when it is apparent that the customer can self-serve through this channel.
12. Customers should also be encouraged to register for Next Step on the web to enable them to create their own personalised online space, including storing documents such as CVs and Skills Diagnostic tool results.
13. Other examples of when customers may need or choose to make use of the web channel might include when they have exhausted their entitlement to the face-to-face advice offer or when they fall outside the priority group for



additional free face-to-face interventions. But all customers can make use of the web channel at any point in the service and at any time.

14. The Prime Contractor must ensure that all face-to-face advisers understand the role of the website and can use the website and resources as part of their session with a customer and (based on customer need and choice) must be able to:

- Support customers to register for Next Step to create their own personal online space
- Use the skills diagnostic tool
- Search for course details and locations
- View relevant job profiles
- Point customers to the website for advice on producing CVs ,covering letters and applying for jobs
- Use the job search facility where appropriate
- Access advice on funding sources for learning
- View and use national and regional labour market information

#### **Web channel to face-to-face**

15. The web channel will provide the contact address for the main delivery site of the face-to-face Prime Contractor for customers who make the choice to follow up their web experience with a face-to-face contact. It is envisaged that at a later date the facility for a customer to search for a local office in their area directly from the web channel will also be available. Contact with the face-to-face service will still be made through the single national telephone number.

16. In particular the customer may contact the face-to-face channel (via the national telephone number) for additional support, if for example if they need more help to interpret their Skills Diagnostic report or would like a more detailed conversation about local services.

17. The customer will always be given the option of making contact with either the face-to-face service or the telephone service.

#### **Web channel to telephone channel**

18. The web channel will provide the national telephone for the customer to access additional support from a telephone contact centre adviser. This may be





for 'first line' support or, if appropriate, onward referral may be made to advice available through the telephone channel.

19. In particular the customer may contact the telephone channel for additional support, if for example if they need more help to interpret their Skills Diagnostic Tool report.
20. The customer will always be given the option of making contact with either the face-to-face service or the telephone service.

### **Telephone channel to web service**

21. Telephone contact centre advisers should always tell customers about the web channel including the ability to use the web at any time.
22. Customers should also be encouraged to register for Next Step on the web to enable them to create their own personalised online space, including storing documents such as CVs and Skills Diagnostic tool results.
23. The customer can choose to use the web channel and should be encouraged to do so when it is clear that the customer can self-serve through this channel.

### **Telephone numbers for the Service**

24. The national telephone number for the service is 0800 100 900
25. In addition a separate number will exist to provide an access route to the contact centre for Jobcentre Plus customers and advisers, where a customer has been signposted or referred to the service. The telephone number for Jobcentre Plus customers and advisers is 0800 924 429
26. All calls go through to the same single pool of first line advisers at the telephone contact centre.
27. The telephone contact centre adviser can identify the number that the caller has dialled whilst on the phone and respond appropriately to support different campaigns.
28. Separate telephone numbers are available on the customer web portal to support customer with specific language needs.
29. The telephone numbers for the Language Line services are:

Language	Telephone number
Gujerati	0800 093 1119



Punjabi	0800 093 1333
Somali	0800 093 1555
Syleti	0800 093 1444
Urdu	0800 093 1118
Farsi	0800 093 1116
Polish	0800 093 1114
French	0800 093 1115

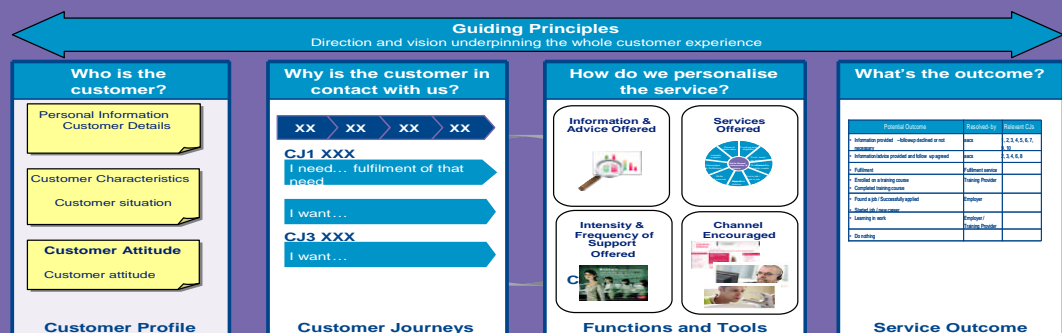
## 4. Operating Instructions: Service Standards

1. Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel must comply with the requirements of national service standards. The purposes of the standards are to:
  - ensure that quality and delivery across the service exceeds minimum Skills Funding Agency and OfSTED standards;
  - deliver better customer service and improved outcomes for customers and;
  - establish common agreed underpinning principles and quality standards across the whole of the service
2. These Service Standards have been developed to shape the delivery of the service and should be used to provide the focus for how advisers work with customers.
3. All advisers and others involved in the delivery of services must be made aware of and fully understand how the service standards apply to them and then demonstrate this in their work with customers.
4. The delivery of the service should be driven by:
  - A set of Guiding Principles for the service that provide the direction and overall approach
  - A customer experience framework that puts the customer at the heart of how the service works, thinks and prioritises.
  - Seven Service Standards written from a customer perspective that are aligned with **matrix**, the quality assurance standards for information advice and guidance.
5. Please also refer to the Brand section of these Operating instructions for details of the Mission and Vision for the Service.
6. We have also provided some examples of how the Service Standards can be demonstrated and measured for each channel of the service.
7. The relationship between the Vision, Guiding Principles, Customer Experience Framework and Service Standards is set out in the diagram below.

# Single Vision supported by one brand

## Guiding Principles

### Customer Experience Framework



### Service Expectations



## Key Performance Indicators



## Guiding Principles

8. The following Guiding Principles have been defined which build a foundation for the service.
9. The Guiding Principles provide the direction and overall approach for how the service is designed and delivered.
10. The service must be designed and delivered to customers in line with these Guiding Principles. The Guiding Principles are not public facing or visible to the customer.

Guiding Principle	Impact on the customer
The service will provide a rich customer-focused service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The customer can access a universal information and advice service about careers, courses and funding, with a depth of service that includes personalised and comprehensive advice delivered by qualified advisers</li> <li>Customers trust that the service is of a high quality and that advice will be appropriate for them</li> </ul>
Customers need to provide information in order to realise the full benefits of the service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A customer has to put something in to get something out. A customer can remain anonymous, but they will not be able to access the full range of services</li> <li>Detailed information is required from a customer when they have an advice session in order to personalise the advice they receive</li> </ul>
The service is built on a set of common and shared standards and responsibilities – shared with the customer as well as across the service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The customer understands what service they are able to access, and their own rights and responsibilities in accessing that service, and where the links are with partner organisations, for example Jobcentre Plus</li> <li>It is the customer's responsibility to act on the advice provided</li> </ul>
The service provides a free impartial universal service by providing customers with options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The customer feels that the advice that they access enables them to advance and is appropriate for them</li> <li>The service is accessible to all adults in England (19 and over and 18 and over for Jobcentre Plus customers or those in custody)</li> <li>The customer accesses advice which enables them to make a decision for themselves</li> </ul>
Our customer security is paramount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The customer feels confident about providing and receiving all information across all our channels</li> <li>Customers provide shared secrets to allow their identity to be checked when returning to the service and supporting a single service across multiple channels</li> <li>The customer understands that data is shared across channels and that data and information policies comply with legislation and Skills Funding Agency commitments</li> <li>A customer can choose to be anonymous if they wish to be, but this will restrict the services they can access</li> </ul>
The service will be provided in England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The service provides information and advice about training, and work in England, with regional and local information provided where appropriate</li> <li>It is recognised that those outside England will be able to access the service - handoffs to careers advice services in other parts of the UK (e.g. Wales and Scotland) will need to be put in place</li> </ul>

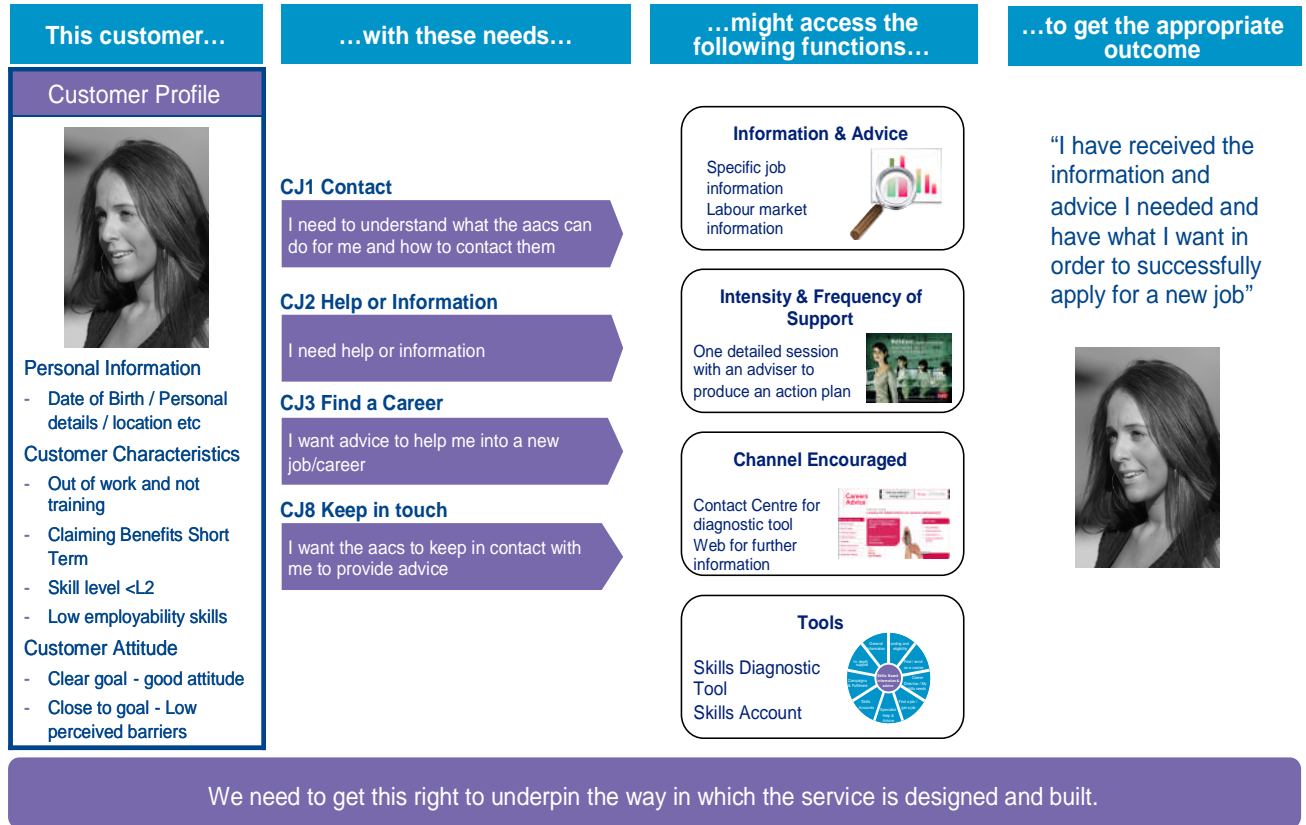
The service will be aligned to government priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The service operates within the context of government and departmental priorities, with which it needs to align</li> </ul>
Course of action will be based on the Customer Experience Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The service is tailored to customer need – intensity, frequency and content of those sessions is proportional to need and aligned to policy</li> <li>▪ The Customer Experience Framework will help to guide the course of action. It doesn't provide hard and fast rules as to the action advisers should take, it is flexible to allow focus on outcomes</li> </ul>
Our channels are integrated and aligned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The customer feels that the service has been designed for them and accesses a consistent branded experience across all channels, including key partners and third parties</li> <li>▪ The customer sees the service as providing joined-up advice, and feels that hand-offs between channels are seamless</li> <li>▪ The customer accesses the same level of service whoever they speak to and however they speak to us</li> <li>▪ When the customer touches the service we are aware of what they have done before</li> <li>▪ We aim to promote the use of the most appropriate channels for communicating with the service to create 'Intelligent Consumers of the Service'</li> </ul>
The service will be outcome-focused and action-oriented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The customer can access a service that enables them to make informed choices</li> <li>▪ The customer's needs are understood, and the service is based on an assessment of skills</li> <li>▪ Skills information and advice is focused on the appropriate or right outcome - we will enable customers to progress in their working lives appropriate to their needs and situation</li> <li>▪ The customer accesses advice that is practical, realistic, and balances short term requirements with longer term goals</li> </ul>
The service is based on the identification and removal of barriers and challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The customer accesses a tailored service that takes into account their current situation and any real or perceived barriers to work or learning. This supports the service being outcome-focused</li> <li>▪ Expert advisers are empowered to resolve a customer's queries and probe deeper than the initial query to identify other barriers and issues</li> <li>▪ Within the web channel, the service will use customer insight to anticipate and overcome common barriers and challenges and provide appropriate guidance</li> </ul>
The service will have a continuous improvement and development culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The service will continually improve by acting on customer and staff feedback, including adviser coaching in an open environment, and continuing web development to ensure that the web channel remains fit for purpose</li> <li>▪ Continuous improvement and development also applies outwardly to enable the customer to improve throughout their life</li> <li>▪ A continuous improvement culture supports the operation becoming outcome-focused</li> </ul>
The service is proactive in offering outbound contact with customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The customer feels valued – information and advice is followed-up in order to offer a better customer experience</li> <li>▪ The service is built on an ongoing relationship with the customer</li> </ul>

## Customer Experience Framework

11. The Customer Experience Framework puts the customer at the heart of how the service works, thinks and prioritises. It ensures that the service can be designed with the customer in mind to ensure that business objectives are achieved and customers are pleased with the service they receive.
12. The customer experience:
  - Ensures a consistent look and feel across the service
  - Sets out appropriate ways for customers to interact with the service
  - Drives how the service interacts with its customers
  - Demonstrates that the service understands its customers and their needs
  - Allows focus on what the customer needs and the exclusion of what is not necessary, allowing costs to be reduced
13. The Customer Experience Framework allows us to build the service around the customer. Using the Customer Experience Framework we can identify how to personalise the service for each customer to achieve the right outcome in the right way. There are four aspects to the Customer Experience Framework. These are:
  - **Who is the customer?** - Their details, characteristics such as their situation and their attitude, for example their feelings about their situation.
  - **Why is the customer in contact with us?** - Their wants and needs
  - **How we personalise the service** - based on who they are and why they are in contact with the service - For example the information and advice offered, specific services, the intensity and frequency of support offered and which channel will be encouraged and suit them best.
  - **The outcome for the customer** such as information and advice provided, enrolling in training, finding a job or participating in learning and work.
14. The Customer Experience Framework will help to guide the course of action. It doesn't provide hard and fast rules as to the action advisers should take, it is flexible to allow focus on outcomes

15. An example of how the customer experience framework is applied to customers is given below.

### Customer Experience Framework



### The seven Service Standards

16. We have identified seven Service Standards that our customers expect when interacting with the service as illustrated below. These are written from the perspective of the customer and align with **matrix**, the quality assurance standards for information advice and guidance.

17. Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the Telephone channel must ensure that the Service Standards are an integral part of service delivery and should be reviewed as part of quality assessment and customer feedback processes and incorporated into arrangements for continuous quality improvement.





### Monitoring and measuring the service standards

18. The service will be monitored and measured in a number of ways including:

- Key Performance Indicators (KPI)
- The OfSTED Common Inspection Framework
- The **matrix** Standard
- Self assessment by Prime Contractors and sub-contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel
- Independent research
- Management information from the customer relationship management (CRM) tool
- Supported by Skills Funding Agency contract managers

### The Service Standards in practice

To see how each of the Service Standards relates to the Guiding Principles and how they might be demonstrated and measured, please [CLICK HERE](#). Further detailed information on national measures can be found in the KPI section of these Operating Instructions.

## 5. Operating Instructions: Hours of Operation

1. The integrated adult careers service will be available through the telephone, face-to-face and web channels as follows:

### Telephone channel

2. The hours of operation for the telephone channel (core service) will be 08:00 to 22:00 Monday to Sunday with the following exceptions in 2010/11:

Christmas Eve	Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> December	8.00 am. - 4.00 pm
Christmas Day	Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> December	Closed
Boxing Day	Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> December	Closed
New Year's Eve	Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> December	8.00 am - 4.00 pm
New Year's Day	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> January	Closed
-	Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup> January	8.00 – 4.00 pm

### Language Lines

3. The Language Lines will be available 09:00 to 17:00 Monday to Friday (with the exception for Punjabi and Urdu which will be available 9am - 8pm). See Service Offer section of Operating Instructions for further details of Language Line support.
4. Telephone numbers for the Language line service are in the Service Offer section of these Operating Instructions and the Next Step website.

### Face-to-face channel

5. The face-to-face channel will put in place flexible hours of operation to meet demand and customer need. This includes operating at times to meet the needs of external organisations including employers in redundancy situations.
6. Prime Contractors must ensure arrangements are in place to receive calls through a single contact point from the telephone channel so there is a seamless transfer of customers wanting to book a face-to-face session. As a minimum these arrangements should be available Monday to Friday 09.00 hours to 17.00 hours (excluding bank holidays)
7. In instances where customers contact the telephone channel for a face-to-face appointment and the office is closed, then calls will be queued in the CRM for the Prime Contractor to follow up on the next working day.



8. The Prime Contractor will inform the contact centre of the main delivery hours of the face-to-face channel.
9. The Prime Contractor will hold details of the operating hours (for service delivery) of all of their service delivery outlets, including outreach centres. The opening hours for delivery of the service should also be displayed at the centre/location delivering the service.

#### **Web channel**

10. The web channel will be available 24 hours a day 7 days a week (with very occasional exceptions where the system needs update or maintenance) and will clearly state the main operating hours of the Telephone and Face-to-face service.

## 6. Operating instructions: Marketing and Communications

1. We believe a consistent and service wide approach to marketing and communications is required to achieve the ambition for Next Step to deliver a seamless customer experience across all the delivery channels. A national marketing strategy will help to establish Next Step and support the three channels of the core offer – web, telephone and face-to-face. It will emphasise the brand values and reflect the brand guidelines.
2. It will be implemented through:
  - a programme of branded marketing communications ranging from PR through to social/digital media
  - building relationships with customers of the service, utilising the CRM system
  - facilitating networking and best practice
  - local marketing communications by face-to-face contractors
  - maximising promotion of the service through a partnership strategy
3. We want to encourage Prime Contractors to actively market and promote Next Step. However because we need to maintain the consistency and integrity of the service brand, high profile activity such as advertising or PR should be agreed and signed off by the Communications Team at the Skills Funding Agency. If in doubt please contact:

**T:** 0114 267 5071

**E:** [jason.jones@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk](mailto:jason.jones@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk)

**or**

**T:** 0114 267 5052

**E:** [jane.palmer2@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk](mailto:jane.palmer2@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk)

### Face-to-face service

4. It is a service requirement that the Prime Contractor:
  - Prepares a marketing and stakeholder engagement strategy as part of their overall delivery plan which reflects and supports the national marketing approach and also reflects the level of intermediary marketing and communications required to support increasing access to the service through all channels of delivery
  - Makes full use of consistent branding
  - Nominates a named contact who will be responsible for marketing and communications, attending meetings, using toolkits and guidance provided as part of the Skills Funding Agency's marketing and communications strategy



- Complies and ensures compliance with the Next Step brand, brand values and guidelines. This will include ensuring that:-
  - Prime Contractors and sub contractors delivering services under the brand fully understand and comply with the brand values, identity and guidelines
  - advisers understand and recognise the importance of the service offer, the brand values and the customer charter
  - customers are aware of their rights and responsibilities when accessing the service
  - Prime Contractors respond to requests for information and provides evaluation data to support marketing campaigns

### **Telephone Channel**

5. The CONTRACTOR must;
  - Make full use of consistent branding
  - Nominate a named contact who will be responsible for marketing and communications, attending meetings, using toolkits and guidance provided as part of the Skills Funding Agency's marketing and communications strategy.
  - Comply and ensure compliance with the Next Step brand, brand values and guidelines. This will include ensuring:-
    - advisers understand and recognise the importance of the service offer, the brand values and the customer charter.
    - customers are aware of their rights and responsibilities when accessing the service.
    - responsiveness to requests for information and provides evaluation data to support marketing campaigns
6. The telephone channel is vital to driving demand. Customers must experience a quality service which will encourage repeat business and personal recommendation. Customers should be made aware of the full range of the Next Step services.
7. Advisers also have a key role in identifying potential case studies for use in marketing.
8. Please also see the Brand Guidelines section of these Operating Instructions.



**Full brand guidelines are available on the Skills Funding Agency's Campaign Resources website –**

**<http://www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/campaignresources>**

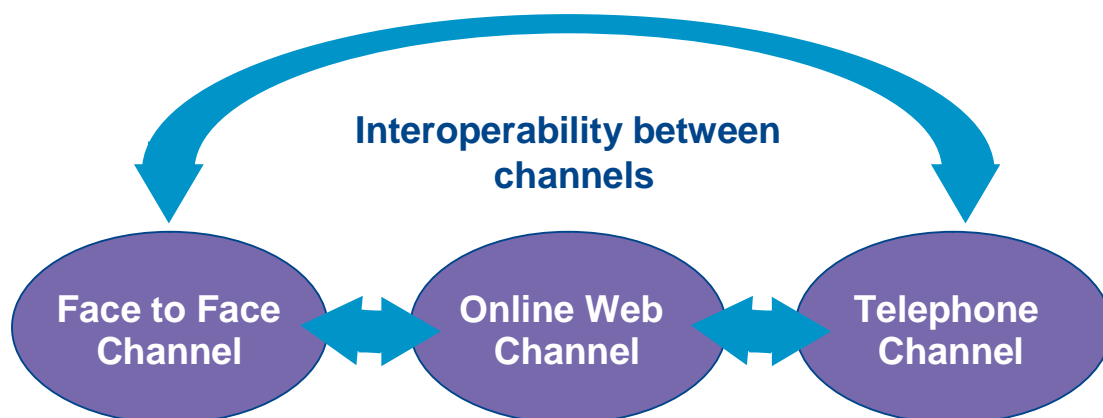
**Advice**

**T: 024 7682 3974**

**E: [amanda.simpson@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk](mailto:amanda.simpson@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk)**

## 7. Operating Instructions: Ways of Working across the face-to-face, telephone and web channels

1. Customers will interact with the service using a blend of channels as described in the diagram below. Interoperability simply means the way in which the service will work as an integrated, single service across the three channels. The movement between the three channels will be supported by a single Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.



2. The Contractor for the telephone channel will establish Operational Coordinators (partnerships) to act as the contact point for designated face-to-face Prime Contractors. Prime Contractors for the face-to-face channel must also designate a named contact point to work with the telephone channel.
3. These designated named contact points will work directly to develop this relationship but must ensure that the Skills Funding Agency Operational Managers in each regional contract area are kept up-to-date and agree any key decisions relating to delivery of the contract.
4. How the customer accesses the service will be driven by customer choice. There will be a single national telephone number, 0800 100 900, for customers to access (including booking face-to-face appointments), the face-to-face and telephone channels and there will be one web-site.
5. The service will provide a blend of national, regional and local content and the following table outlines examples of what a customer can expect from the different channels including the type of Labour Market Information (LMI) at national, regional and local level.

Level	Web Channel	Telephone Channel	Face-to-face
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full national service with broad universal information and features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full national service with broad universal information and features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full national service with broad universal information and features</li> </ul>
Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some regional information through regional areas of the site and customised searches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional information and advice captured through the regional relationship manager role</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed regional information, potentially shared through the prime contractor knowledge management role</li> </ul>
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some local information through postcode searches (e.g. job or course searches)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited local information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High amount of local information and knowledge available to be accessed by a customer</li> </ul>

6. The prime Contractor and Contractor for the telephone service must have systems and processes in place to ensure a seamless transition between the:

- Telephone channel to face-to face channel
- Face-to-face to telephone channel
- Face-to-face to web channel
- Web channel to face-to-face channel
- Web channel to telephone channel
- Telephone channel to web channel

### Telephone channel to face-to-face

7. Advisers for the telephone channel must always make customers aware of the face-to-face service and discussion should include reference to the local services being available.
8. The Prime Contractor must ensure arrangements are in place to receive calls from the telephone channel so that there is a seamless transfer of customers wanting to book a face-to-face session.
9. The telephone number for each Prime Contractor will not be public facing but will only be used by telephone contact centre staff to make contact with the face-to-face channel. This can include the warm transfer of customers to book the appointment themselves.
10. As a minimum these arrangements should be available at the face-to-face service Monday to Friday 09.00 hours to 17.00 hours (excluding bank holidays). See Hours of Operation section.





11. When advisers contact the telephone channel for a face-to-face appointment and the office of the face-to-face Prime Contractor is closed, then tasks will be queued in the CRM for the Prime Contractor to follow up on the next working day. Details held in the queuing system will include contact details and the reason for the enquiry. The customer will then be contacted directly by the face-to-face service
12. For Jobcentre Plus customers the following arrangements will apply:
  - Jobcentre Plus advisers will signpost their customers to Next Step using the national telephone number 0800 100 900
  - Jobcentre Plus advisers wanting to book a face-to-face appointment should telephone 08000 924 429.
  - However, in co-located offices if a Next Step Advisers is available the Jobcentre Plus adviser can refer the customer for an immediate appointment if the adviser is free or an appointment can be booked directly through the CRM system.
  - Where engagement activity is taking place e.g. jobsfairs, advisers can book appointments directly through the CRM without going through the telephone channel

#### **Face-to-face to telephone channel**

13. Customers must always be made aware of the telephone channel and discussion should include information on the extended opening hours of the telephone channel and ongoing service offer. The amount and type of use the customer makes of the telephone channel will be driven by customer choice and needs. All customers can make use of the telephone channel at any point in the service.
14. Particular examples of when customers may need or choose to make use of the telephone channel might include, if they cannot easily travel to a face-to-face location, when they have exhausted their entitlement to the funded face-to-face offer or when they fall outside the priority group for additional free face-to-face advice sessions.
15. Customers may use the information and advice services of the telephone channel as many times as they wish

#### **Face-to-face to web channel**

16. All face-to-face advisers must make customers aware of the web channel and service offer available on the web, including the ability to use web channel at any time. This may also be included as a resource in the Skills Action Plan.

17. The customer can always choose to use the web channel and should be encouraged to do so when it is apparent that the customer can self-serve through this channel.
18. Customers should also be encouraged to register for Next Step on the web to enable them to create their own personalised online space, including storing documents such as CVs and Skills Diagnostic tool results.
19. Other examples of when customers may need or choose to make use of the web channel might include when they have exhausted their entitlement to the face-to-face advice offer or when they fall outside the priority group for additional free face-to-face interventions. But all customers can make use of the web channel at any point in the service and at any time.
20. The Prime Contractor must ensure that all face-to-face advisers understand the role of the website and can use the website and resources as part of their session with a customer and (based on customer need and choice) must be able to:
  - Support customers to register for Next Step to create their own personal online space
  - Use the skills diagnostic tool
  - Search for course details and locations
  - View relevant job profiles
  - Point customers to the website for advice on producing CVs ,covering letters and applying for jobs
  - Use the job search facility where appropriate
  - Access advice on funding sources for learning
  - View and use national and regional labour market information

### **Web channel to face-to-face**

21. The web channel will provide the contact address for the main delivery site of the face-to-face Prime Contractor for customers who make the choice to follow up their web experience with a face-to-face contact. It is envisaged that at a later date the facility for a customer to search for a local office in their area directly from the web channel will also be available. Contact with the face-to-face service will still be made through the single national telephone number.
22. In particular the customer may contact the face-to-face channel (via the national telephone number) for additional support, if for example if they need more help to interpret their Skills Diagnostic report or would like a more detailed conversation about local services.



23. The customer will always be given the option of making contact with either the face-to-face service or the telephone service.

#### **Web channel to telephone channel**

24. The web channel will provide the national telephone for the customer to access additional support from a telephone contact centre adviser. This may be for 'first line' support or, if appropriate, onward referral may be made to advice available through the telephone channel.
25. In particular the customer may contact the telephone channel for additional support, if for example if they need more help to interpret their Skills Diagnostic Tool report.
26. The customer will always be given the option of making contact with either the face-to-face service or the telephone service.

#### **Telephone channel to web service**

27. Telephone contact centre advisers should always tell customers about the web channel including the ability to use the web at any time.
28. Customers should also be encouraged to register for Next Step on the web to enable them to create their own personalised online space, including storing documents such as CVs and Skills Diagnostic tool results.
29. The customer can choose to use the web channel and should be encouraged to do so when it is clear that the customer can self-serve through this channel.

#### **Telephone numbers for the Service**

30. The national telephone number for the service is 0800 100 900
31. In addition a separate number will exist to provide an access route to the contact centre for Jobcentre Plus customers and advisers, where a customer has been signposted or referred to the service. The telephone number for Jobcentre Plus customers and advisers is 0800 924 429
32. All calls go through to the same single pool of first line advisers at the telephone contact centre.

33. The telephone contact centre adviser can identify the number that the caller has dialled whilst on the phone and respond appropriately to support different campaigns.
34. Separate telephone numbers are available on the customer web portal to support customer with specific language needs.
35. The telephone numbers for the Language Line services are:

Language	Telephone number
Gujerati	0800 093 1119
Punjabi	0800 093 1333
Somali	0800 093 1555
Syleti	0800 093 1444
Urdu	0800 093 1118
Farsi	0800 093 1116
Polish	0800 093 1114
French	0800 093 1115

## **8. Operating Instructions: Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System**

1. To enable the delivery of the single service, a common customer relationship management (CRM) system will be implemented across the service. This will enable a seamless customer experience between the web, telephone and face-to-face channels of the service.
2. The CRM will be able to carry out the following functions. It will enable Prime Contractors to:
  - track individual customer's interaction with the service;
  - access customer information including key contacts with advisers within the service
  - record outcomes including any referrals or signposting;
  - pre-register customers for Next Step to allow them to create their own personalised online space
  - create and save Skills Action Plans
  - Support campaigns through the telephone channel
  - produce MI for operational management and service improvement reports (for some users);
3. All advisers must use the CRM to enable the delivery of a truly integrated service. Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel must ensure that all staff receive appropriate and timely training to effectively use the system.
4. A Train the Trainers User Manual has been developed to support advisers in training other advisers on the use of the CRM system. (Link to CRM User manual) including the completion of the Skills Action Plan.
5. Prime Contractors must nominate a 'super user' of the CRM to work with the Skills Funding Agency on the development of the CRM (including training and system updates) and provide details of the users of different categories of the system. Further information will be provided on the role of the super user and other users of the system. Please also see details of the technical support desk in paragraph 22 below.
6. The aggregated results/MI from the CRM will be available in due course to the Prime Contractors, Contractor for the telephone channel, Skills Funding Agency and the Department for Business Innovation and Skills. The information will be used to improve the reach and quality of the service;

7. Prime Contractors (and any sub-contractors) and the Contractor for the telephone channel must also ensure that they have the appropriate operating system, software and hardware requirements for Microsoft Dynamics web client. See Annex A below for details.
8. All users of the CRM involved in the delivery of the careers and skills advice services (including non delivery staff who have access to personal data) must have been subject to a satisfactory enhanced criminal records bureau (CRB) and a baseline (personnel security) standard check. Staff must be subject to a satisfactory enhanced CRB check a minimum of every three years and new staff must be subject to an enhanced satisfactory CRB check within three months of commencing work on the contract. See Section on Safeguarding for further details.
9. Please also see the Data Security section of these Operating Instructions for details of how to ensure the ID matching of customers when accessing their records on the CRM.
10. All Skills Action Plans must be created using the CRM system. Advisers in the face-to-face channel must obtain the signature of the customer on the Skills Action Plan in order to be able to claim funding for the advice interview. The data capture form does not have to be signed separately as it is not used to claim funding. See below for arrangements where face-to-face advisers do not have internet connectivity.
11. The first advice session must result in a Skills Action Plan but subsequent sessions could result in either a new action plan or modification of the existing plan. Any changes to the Skills Action Plan in the face-to-face channel require the signature of customer to be gathered in order to claim funding for the session.

**Arrangements for face-to-face advisers where the adviser has no immediate access to the internet**

12. The Prime Contractor is expected to make every effort to make arrangements for advisers to have access to the internet to support the delivery of their work and services to customers.
13. However, it is recognised that to reach our target audience and provide comprehensive geographic coverage of an area those services will sometimes be delivered in locations where internet access is not always or easily available. These arrangements only apply in exceptional circumstances where internet connectivity is not possible.

14. All the arrangements set out below must be carried out in line with the Data Security requirements set out in the Data Security section of these Operating Instructions.

15. If an adviser does not have connectivity to the internet they should:

#### **At the time of the interview**

- Use the [off-line word template](#) available on the Next Step Team site or from the Prime Contractor to create a data capture form and Skills Action Plan for each customer. This form mirrors the customer record intervention and Skills Action Plan record in the CRM data capture form in the CRM.
- Make sure all information is recorded and typed into this document at the time of the interview
- Two copies of the Skills Action Plan should then be printed by printing off the relevant pages at the end of the data capture form. Both copies of the Skills Action Plan must be signed by the customer.
- One copy of the Skills Action Plan should be given to the customer and one copy retained by the adviser to support the claim for funding for the advice session.
- If no printer is available the customer should be asked to sign a slip to confirm the contents of the Skills Action Plan and arrangements made to send a copy of the Skills Action Plan to the customer at a later date. (See below)

#### **After the interview - CRM**

16. When the adviser next has internet access (and within a maximum of 2 working days) they must then either:

- Use the information in the form to create a new customer record (or amend/update an existing record if appropriate). An intervention record and Skills Action Plan must be created in CRM. The action plan content itself can either be recreated in the CRM which is better for reporting purposes or, the Word file can be included as an attachment in the Notes section of the Action Plan record.
- E mail the completed Word file containing customer data and the Skills Action Plan to any central processing point managed by the Prime Contractor for uploading on to the CRM. Information must be uploaded to the CRM within 2 working days of the interview.



17. Any e mails sent by the adviser must be sent on a daily basis with no more than 15 customers' details sent in one email. E mails must be encrypted to the level that we specify in the Data Security section of these Operating Instructions.

#### **After the interview - Customer**

18. If it is not possible to print the Skills Action Plan at the time of the interview advisers in the face-to-face channel can either:

- E-mail the Skills Action Plan in line with Data Security requirements to a customer following the interview. The Skills Action Plan that is emailed to the customer must be exactly the same as the version signed for (on the slip) by the customer at the time of the interview.

If the Skills Action Plan is created using the Skills Action Plan functionality in the CRM advisers can email the Skills Action Plan using the email function in the CRM. If using the offline form the Skills Action Plan will need to be attached manually as a Word document in the email.

- Post the Skills Action Plan to the customer in line with the Data Security requirements set out in the Data Security section of these Operating Instructions.
19. E mails to customers must never contain sensitive information such as ethnicity, disability/health issues or details regarding offending, custody or community sentences. Please see Data Security section for further details.
20. Particular attention must be paid to the restrictions on recording information on Offenders. Please see the Working with Offenders section of these Operating Instructions for further information.
21. Advisers delivering the service by telephone will always email the Skills Action Plan to customers unless the customer has no email address, in which case it will be posted.

#### **Technical support**

22. Arrangements are in place to ensure that Prime Contractors, sub-contractors and advisers receive appropriate technical support to resolve any issues regarding Skills Funding Agency applications including the CRM and the Next Step website



23. Any technical problems regarding the CRM and Next Step website (including associated applications such as CV builder) will be managed by the central technical support desk. This is not a customer facing support function. The role of the technical support desk is to handle issues connected to Skills Funding Agency applications only. The issues that will be dealt with under this category include:
  - Failure of the system so that the advisers are unable to use the CRM or other applications
  - Inability to access the Next Step customer website or other applications
  - Tools on the Next Step customer website such as CV builder are not working
  - Systems running slowly
24. Prime Contractors must provide contact details (email address, telephone number and postal address) of between 2 and four staff who will be the filter for technical questions from advisers.
25. Their role will be to ensure that the questions forwarded are related to issues or problems with Skills Funding Agency applications and not connected to local systems beyond the control of the Skills Funding Agency. Issues out of scope include:
  - Network connectivity
  - Training issues
  - Hardware issues.
26. It is advised that at least one of the individuals should have received super user training. It is not envisaged that this role will be onerous or that there will be many queries. The nominated individuals will receive further information including an outline of their responsibilities.
27. Prime Contractor nominated contacts will be provided with the email and telephone contact details of the technical support desk. These contact details must only be used by the nominated contacts and not by individual advisers. Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel must provide advisers with the contact details of their own nominated staff who will forward appropriate queries to the technical support desk and provide responses back to the adviser.
28. The technical support system will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it is meeting the needs of both Prime Contractors and the Skills Funding Agency.

## APPENDIX A

### Minimum requirements needed to be able to access and use the CRM system

29. The following specification sets out the minimum IT requirements for advisers to be able to access and use the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.

Operating system	<p>The following operating systems are supported for the Microsoft Dynamics CRM Outlook client:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Windows 7</li> <li>● Windows Vista</li> <li>● Windows XP SP2</li> </ul>
Hardware	<p>The following hardware is required for the Microsoft Dynamics CRM Outlook client:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dual core 1.8 GHz CPU or higher</li> <li>• 2 GB memory or higher</li> <li>• 2 GB free disk space or higher</li> </ul>
Software	<p>The Microsoft Dynamics CRM Web client requires one of the following Internet Explorer Web browser versions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internet Explorer 6 SP1</li> <li>• Internet Explorer 7</li> <li>• Internet Explorer 8</li> </ul> <p>The following settings must be applied to the browser:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popups must be enabled for the application URL.</li> <li>• Application URL must be included in the list of Trusted Sites.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, the following software is required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ieSpell</li> <li>▪ Enterprise Antivirus</li> <li>▪ Full disk encryption using BitLocker or equivalent</li> <li>▪ Microsoft Outlook 2007</li> </ul> <p>To use Microsoft Dynamics CRM Office integration features, such as Export to Excel and Mail Merge, you must have one of the following installed on the computer that is running the Microsoft Dynamics CRM Web client:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Microsoft Office 2003 SP3</li> <li>• Microsoft Office 2007 SP2</li> </ul>
Network	<p>Where the computer running the client is connected to a LAN/WAN, a 100MB/sec capable Network Interface Card (NIC) is recommended.</p> <p>Where the computer running the client is connected to a mobile broadband connection, a HSDPA, 3G, EDGE and GPRS compatible device is recommended to ensure access to the fastest available connection.</p> <p>Where an individual computer running the client is connected to a fixed line broadband connection, a minimum connection bandwidth of 1MB/sec is recommended. If the connection is via WiFi then use of 'G' or 'N' class devices is recommended. For scenarios where multiple computers will be sharing a broadband connection refer to Data Network requirements section below.</p>

Note: Microsoft Windows 2000 editions and Windows XP Media Center Edition are not supported for installing and running Microsoft Dynamics CRM for Outlook.

#### ***Data network requirements for face-to-face advisers***

It has been calculated that it will require approximately 1.06MB of data to be transferred between the internet browser client and the application based on a typical transaction following these steps through the application:

- Home Page
- Contact Search
- Contact Intervention
- Intervention
- SOA Lookup
- Intervention Save

For scenarios where multiple advisers will be sharing a broadband connection for the purpose of updating the system in bulk (based on data captured during appointments where web access was not available) it is recommended that an average duration is determined for completion of a typical transaction and this is used to calculate a connection bandwidth requirement based on the following formula.



(Typical transaction data (MB)/duration (seconds)) \* No. of concurrent advisers sharing a connection = Connection bandwidth (MB/second)

In all cases, a minimum connection bandwidth of 2MB/sec is recommended.

## 9. Operating Instructions: Skills Action Plan

1. The Skills Action Plan forms an important and integral part of the advice process with customers and provides a record of the discussion with the customer that they can use to reflect on their existing skills, plan for future skills development and support achievement of their learning or work goals.
2. The Skills Action Plan also provides evidence of the delivery of the service and should reflect the high quality of the service to contribute to inspection and quality assurance arrangements.
3. All customers who receive an advice session face-to face or through the telephone channel - whether accessing a single session or multiple sessions - must receive a Skills Action Plan.
4. In all cases the Skills Action Plan will now be completed through the customer relationship management system (CRM).
5. Actions to take in the face-to-face channel where there is no internet connection include typing the Skills Action Plan into the off-line template provided ready to attach to the customer's record as soon as internet access is available and within a maximum of 2 working days.
6. Advisers in the face-to-face channel must obtain two signed copies (one for the customer and one for records) of the Skills Action Plan in order to claim funding for the session. Any subsequent modifications to the Skills Action Plan also requires the customer's signature to be gathered in order to claim funding.
7. Please also see the CRM section of these Operating Instructions for further information including details of step by step actions required if the adviser does not have internet access at the time of the interview.
8. Advisers in the telephone channel will always e mail the Skills Action Plan to the customer unless the customer does not have an email address, in which case this will be posted.
9. All actions relating to the Skills Action Plan must be completed in line with Data Security requirements set out in the Data Security section of these Operating Instructions.
10. Particular care must be taken to comply with restrictions and requirements relating to the recording of information about Offenders. Please see the



Working with Offenders section of these Operating Instructions for further information.

### Completing the Skills Action Plan

11. The Skills Action Plan must, as a minimum, capture:

- Personal contact details of the customer
- Details of the adviser
- The customer's current situation
- Their skills and work goals
- Actions needed to achieve their goals
- The signature of the customer (for the face-to-face channel)

12. The Skills Action Plan should:

Be customer focused and identify customer need  
Clearly identify the steps needed to enable the customer to progress  
Include referral to learning and work providers and other agencies as appropriate  
Adopt a positive tone and approach  
Promote equality and diversity  
Only include information the customer agrees to record  
Be easily understood by all readers, grammatically correct and avoiding jargon, unexplained acronyms and abbreviations

13. Skills Action Plans should also be written with the SMART principles in mind. These are:

- **S**pecific - e.g. Being specific about skills and learning and work goals, such as "become a classroom assistant" rather than "want to work with children".
- **M**easurable e.g. Can the customer tell if they have achieved something? .g. applying for a specific course at a specific place rather than just "might do an ESOL course"
- **A**chievable e.g. either now or in the longer term depending on how many steps it might take to achieve the goal.
- **R**ealistic e.g. Are their choices realistic and based on up to date labour market information linked to job goals?
- **T**imebound e.g. Is there an agreed, specific timescale or date for each action agreed?



### **Privacy Notice**

14. Customers must also be made aware of the Privacy Notice setting out how the information contained in the Skills Action Plan may be shared with other specified organisations. Particular attention must be drawn to the provisions of the Welfare Reform Act 2009 with regard to sharing information with the Department for Work and Pensions and Jobcentre Plus.

## **10. Operating Instructions: Joint working to meet the needs of the unemployed**

1. Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel must manage and co-ordinate the delivery of careers and skills advice services to Jobcentre Plus customers.
2. This will include developing, as appropriate, in the face-to-face and telephone channels, close working relationships with the Skills Funding Agency, Jobcentre Plus; and, for the face-to-face Prime Contractor, other relevant regional and sub-regional bodies to plan activity within the region or area, to include working actively with Jobcentre Plus at a local level to improve turn up rates for appointments and reduce waiting times for customers.
3. The service offer for Jobcentre Plus customers is the in-depth, on-going careers and skills advice and support set out in the Service Offer section of these Instructions. The offer provided to Jobcentre Plus customers should be one that:
  - helps people to increase their skills levels to compete effectively in the labour market and to support them back into work;
  - breaks the “low pay no pay” cycle by helping people get the job search skills they need to stay in work and progress where they can;
  - helps people develop employability related skills and
  - supports people to develop their skills to help them make the most of their abilities and opportunities in the local labour market
4. In the Jobcentre Plus context, the skills assessment element of the in-depth offer is being referred to as the skills health check. The skills health check may include the use of the skills diagnostic tool.
5. The Prime Contractor and the Contractor for the telephone channel provides support for planning and co-ordination of the offer nationally through the telephone channel and in the region/sub-region for the face-to-face channel, through:
  - Clear joint strategic planning for services to Jobcentre Plus customers nationally for the telephone channel and in the district or region and participation in any relevant regional planning groups by agreement for the face-to-face channel;
  - Active and effective communication between Next Step Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel and Jobcentre Plus colleagues;



- Building knowledge about Jobcentre Plus services at strategic and operational levels;
- Sharing knowledge about the service offer with Jobcentre Plus staff at strategic and operational levels;
- Responding effectively to emerging needs such as large-scale redundancies and large-scale job opportunities;
- Developing innovative responses to reaching Jobcentre Plus customers including, for the face-to-face channel, through shared outreach provision and locations;
- Working with Connexions services and Jobcentre Plus to ensure a seamless careers advice and skills service for 18 year old JCP customers. This will also include the provision of a seamless service to those 18 year olds leaving custody. See Working with Offenders section;
- Working in conjunction with Jobcentre Plus, the Skills Funding Agency and learning providers to facilitate the implementation of electronic systems. This will allow the sharing of customer data between Jobcentre Plus, Next Step and learning providers;
- Ensuring the co-location of face-to-face advisers in Jobcentre Plus offices where appropriate and possible, through planned arrangements for permanent, temporary and outreach approaches based on customer need and geographical location;
- Ensuring that advisers use agreed processes and documentation for booking appointments, transfer of information between Jobcentre Plus and Next Step, including sharing of the Skills Action Plan as appropriate;
- Ensuring that any customers mandated to the face-to-face channel are provided with the service required by the Jobcentre Plus personal adviser in order to meet the conditions of mandation of the Jobseekers direction.

## 6. Booking appointments for Jobcentre Plus customers

7. Jobcentre Plus customers will be either signposted<sup>2</sup> through the national telephone number 0800 100 900 or referred<sup>3</sup> to the telephone channel using the dedicated Jobcentre Plus number 08000 924 429. Please also see Ways of Working section in the Instructions.
- Jobcentre Plus advisers who are referring a customer to Next Step can either:
  - Book an appointment for the customer with a face-to-face adviser by telephoning the dedicated phone number and the Jobcentre Plus adviser will then be transferred to the relevant Prime Contractor. Out-of-hours the

<sup>2</sup> Signposting - The customer will be made aware of the service by the issue of a leaflet or some other collateral

<sup>3</sup> Referral- An appointment is made for a customer by a third party and Next Step in the face-to-face channel may receive information from that third party.



request will be queued as a task in the CRM for the Prime Contractor to follow up on the next working day. Details held in the queuing system will include contact details and the reason for the inquiry. The customer will then be contacted directly by the Prime Contractor.

- Arrange for the customer to speak to a telephone channel adviser either immediately or at another time to suit the customer
8. In co-located offices if a Next Step adviser is available, the Next Step adviser can either see the customer 'there and then' or book an appointment through the CRM.
  9. Where engagement activity is taking place e.g. jobsfairs, advisers can book appointments directly through the CRM without going through the telephone channel.
  10. Please also see the Service Offer section of the Operating Instructions for further information.



## 11. Operating Instructions: Working with Offenders

### Face-to-face channel

1. These instructions are for those delivering the face-to-face element of the service. Advisers delivering the service by telephone need to be aware of paragraphs 11 and 12 below should a customer disclose that they are an offender.
2. The Prime Contractor will need to provide services that meet the needs of offenders and ex-offenders in the community. These are customers who are defined as:
  - Offenders on licence from custody under the supervision of probation (comprising on average 30% of their caseload);
  - Offenders serving a community sentence or order under the supervision of probation (comprising on average 70% of their caseload);
  - Offenders who have a sentence of less than 12 months who are released from custody *without a supervision requirement*.
3. The Prime Contractor needs to develop close working relationships in their locality with NOMS (National Offender Management Service), which includes both probation and prison services. The first two categories of offender (as outlined in Paragraph 1) will be managed by the probation service; the third may be referred from custody. Until the responsibility for the Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) careers information and advice service (CIAS) transfers to the Prime Contractor on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2012 the Prime Contractor will develop arrangements with the CIAS provider and establishments with regard to 'through the gate' activity. These arrangements will form part of the transition work with existing OLASS Careers Information Advice Service (CIAS) set out below.
4. Individuals who have been released from custody may have information in the form of a hard copy Learner Plan, about the learning activity or work experience that they have undertaken while in custody. The Learner Plan will also provide a record of an individual's Unique Learner Number (ULN) and continued use of the ULN should be encouraged if an individual progresses to mainstream learning provision. The Learner Plan is only issued to offenders serving a custodial sentence and must therefore be treated as sensitive information.
5. Offenders in the community who are unemployed may be referred to Next Step by Jobcentre Plus advisers (See section on Working with the Unemployed). However, particular note must be taken of the instructions

relating to any input to the CRM on individuals that advisers are aware are under sentence (See paras.11 and 12).

6. Prime Contractors will need to reach agreement with the Skills Funding Agency, probation trust and, where appropriate, Jobcentre Plus on:
  - how and by whom, offenders will be referred through an agreed set of processes and documentation (see paras. 7 and 8);
  - where the service will be delivered; on Jobcentre Plus (see 8), probation or outreach premises to get the best fit within local arrangements;
  - how proper account is taken of risk management in line with probation recommendations and the sentence plan
  - what data can be recorded and shared with regard to offenders (see paras. 11 and 12 below)
7. Prime Contractor staff working with offenders must ensure that they make recommendations in line with identified risk and the sentence plan, as this may limit long-term employment options and the type of learning and training they can undertake. High risk offenders may not be able to undertake training on courses and on premises open to other members of the public.
8. Prime Contractor and sub-contractor staff must agree referral processes with Offender Managers and/or Education Training and Employment (ETE) advisers in each probation trust to ensure that they have all the required information to complete a Skills Action Plan which takes into account the nature of the offence and any related restrictions.
9. The Prime Contractor should be aware that the Ministry of Justice and DWP have undertaken a joint review of arrangements for unemployed offenders in both custody and community. One of the recommendations from the review is the use of a shared consent form known as an [ETE Referral Form](#). This form is completed by the Offender Manager or ETE Adviser, so the Jobcentre Plus adviser knows that the individual is an offender. Next Step advisers may receive these forms for unemployed offenders from the Jobcentre Plus adviser. There is also a [ETE Referral Guide](#) available.
10. From 1<sup>st</sup> August 2012 the Prime Contractor will be responsible for providing careers and skills advice to prisoners. The service is currently provided by the Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) and the Prime Contractor will be required to work with OLASS CIAS providers from the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2010 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2012 to ensure that appropriate transition arrangements are in place. More information about this will be provided in due course.

## Recording information on Offenders

11. It is imperative that **under no circumstance** is any reference made in the free text boxes on the CRM, Skills Action Plan or any off-line recording of information that an individual may be an offender. That is, either serving a current sentence or having completed their sentence.
12. To aid advisers a list of prohibited text is provided below. This list of prohibited text has been agreed between the Skills Funding Agency and the National Offender Management service and Prime Contractors must ensure that existing and any new advisers are made aware of this instruction. This list is not exhaustive and advisers must continue to carefully consider input to free text boxes in the Skills Action Plan. Prime Contractors will be informed, in writing, by the Skills Funding Agency of any changes that may be made to this instruction in the future.

### Prohibited Text

ARSONIST/S	Arson
ASBO	Anti Social Behaviour Order/s
ASSAULT	Assaulted
BAIL	Bail Hostel/s
BURGLAR	Burglary      Burglars      Burgle Burglaries
CAPTIVITY	Captive/s
CELL/S	
CONVICTION	Convict/s      Convicted
CRIME/s	
CRIMINAL/S	
CUSTODY	Custodial
EXTREMIST/S	
FELONY	Felon/s
FINED	Fine/s Fines
GAOL/S	Gaoler/s
GUILTY	Guilt
HDC	Home Detention Curfew
HMP, H.M.P. HMPS, H.M.P.S.	Her Majesty's Prison Her Majesty's Prison Service
IMPRISON	
INMATE/S	
JAIL/S	
KILLING/S	Killer/s
MISDEMEANOUR/S	



MUGGER/S	
MURDERER/s	Murder/s
OFFENCE/S	
OFFENDER/S	
PAEDOPHILE/S	Paedophilia
PAROLE	
PRISON/S                  PRISONER/S	
PROBATION	
RAPIST/S	Rape/s
RECIDIVIST/S	Recidivism
REMAND	Remanded
SHOPLIFTER/S	Shoplift
STEALING	Steal   Stole
TERRORIST/S	
THEFT/S THIEF THIEVE/S	Thievery
YOI	Young Offender Institution/s
YOT	Youth Offending Team/s

## 12. Operating Instructions: National Measures, KPIs and Service Levels

1. National measures, key performance indicators (KPIs) and Service Levels have been defined to measure overall performance across the service.
2. Regional KPIs will also be agreed for each Prime Contractor and will form part of the Prime Contractor's contract for delivery of the service. Customised KPIs will also be established for the telephone channel.

### National measures (Targets)

3. The following overall national impact measure for the service has been defined to measure the success of the service and all channels must be working to achieve this target. The overall national impact measure will be achieved by aggregating the performance of the telephone, face-to-face and web channel.

A minimum of 50% of customers who receive advice which results in a skills action plan being created should achieve a positive outcome.

A positive outcome is defined as:

- Getting a job and remaining in sustainable employment for 13 weeks
- Progression in work
- Progression in skills acquisition

Receiving advice is defined as creating a skills action plan either facilitated by a telephone or face-to-face adviser or self served through the web channel.

4. It is recognised that customers who only receive information may also go on to progress as a result of their interaction with the service and these may be counted towards the progression target.
5. Outcomes will only be paid for customers based on the evidence requirements set out in the Budget and Funding section of these Operating Instructions.

### Measuring Progression through the face-to-face channel

6. The national impact measure is made up from a number of more detailed service targets. For the face-to-face channel these have been identified as:

- 40% of face-to-face customers who create an action plan and go on to enter learning or training;
  - 30% of face-to-face customers who create an action plan and go on to enter sustainable<sup>4</sup> employment;
  - 15% of face-to-face customers who create an action plan and go on to progress in work;
7. it is also a requirement that of those customers receiving Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) who are referred to the service by Jobcentre Plus and create an Action Plan:
- 40% enter learning or training
  - 30% enter sustainable employment
8. The key national performance indicators for the face-to-face channel are:
- 45% of face-to-face customers to become qualified to a higher level;
  - at least 15% of customers to have a learning difficulty or disability that could adversely affect their participation in work;
  - 95% of customers to be satisfied with the service they receive; and
  - 100% of organisations delivering the core face-to-face offer to be accredited to the **matrix** Standard within six months of the start of the contract.
9. Follow up will be carried out for all customers receiving advice, via the face-to-face channel, one, three and six months after the customer's last intervention.
10. Follow up at 1 and 3 months will be carried out by Prime Contractor staff. Further information on how follow up is to be carried out at 6 months will be confirmed in due course.
11. Follow-up should be carried out by the adviser who had the **last** contact with the customer. For instance, if a telephone channel adviser sees a customer and then refers them to the face-to-face channel it would be the responsibility face-to-face adviser to follow up the customer.
12. It is also good practice for advisers to remain in contact with customers as part of their ongoing relationship and support to the customer. Formal follow up does not take the place of this informal contact.

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<sup>4</sup> Sustainable employment is defined as being in employment for 13 weeks.





13. The Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system will flag after 31 days of inactivity after the last point of contact that a follow up is needed and then after another 2 months.
14. The results of a follow-up must be captured in the CRM system to enable the collection and reporting of management information and performance management.
15. The Prime Contractor will receive an outcome payment when evidence is provided that the customer has progressed. See Budget and Funding section of the Operating Instructions for details of evidence requirements.

### **Measuring progression through the telephone channel**

16. As well as the national impact measure of 50% of advice customers achieving a positive outcome the telephone channel also has a target of 40% of customers receiving the information service to achieve a positive outcome as set out in paragraph 3.
17. Follow up at 1 and 3 months will be carried out by the Contractor for the telephone channel. Further information on how follow up is to be carried out at 6 months will be confirmed in due course.

### **Measuring progression through the web channel**

18. For customers accessing the service via the web channel, progression will be measured by taking a representative sample of customers who have registered with the service and conducting a customer survey. The survey will focus on both customer progression and satisfaction of the service that they received.
19. It is envisaged that these surveys would be conducted through email. In addition customers using the web channel (whether registered or not) would be asked periodically if they wish to complete a web survey to gauge satisfaction.

### **Regional Key Performance Indicators**

20. As well as the national impact measures and key performance indicators, regional key performance indicators and specified regional priorities will also steer the focus of activity by Prime Contractors for the face-to-face channel. These will normally, but not always, align with the national priority groups for in-depth and ongoing support. Regional KPIs are set out in the Prime Contractor contract for the face-to-face channel.

21. Regional KPI's will be reviewed annually and may be varied or different ones identified throughout over the life of the contract.

## Service Levels

22. The following service levels have been defined for all channels and for channel specific levels.

Channel	Service Levels
All channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The service must achieve and maintain an overall 75% quality assurance rating for internal audits</li> <li>▪ The service must achieve a 90% quality measure for external audits</li> <li>▪ Quality assurance will include monitoring for completeness and accuracy of data captured (target of 95% of data captured is complete and accurate)</li> <li>▪ Skills Action Plans must be prepared for each advice session</li> <li>▪ If information required by the customer is long or detailed, or the adviser feels it appropriate, information will be confirmed in writing, via email or text (whichever is best for the customer), within a maximum of 5 working day (letter/email/ text is sent) of the advice session.</li> <li>▪ Complaints in writing (directly related to the quality of the service) will receive an initial response within 48 hours and a final response within 5 working days.</li> <li>▪ The telephone channel will deal with complaints by telephone or email and not by letter unless this is requested by the customer</li> </ul>
Telephone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 90% of calls will be answered within 15 seconds with an abandon rate of &lt;5%</li> <li>▪ Customers of the telephone channel will send the Skills Action Plan out within 24 hours of the service being received</li> <li>▪ Web form enquiries should be answered within one working day</li> <li>▪ The telephone channel will reply to letters within 24 hours of receipt</li> <li>▪ In busy periods, callers' details can be taken for call backs</li> </ul>

**Face-to-face**

which should be delivered within a maximum of 24 hours. In addition, should the advisers need to undertake additional research on behalf of the customer, a call back will be carried out within than 24 hours

- Face-to-face appointments will be delivered within 5 working days - or later at the specific request of customers
- Customers of the face-to-face channel should be given a copy of the Skills Action Plan at the end of their session
- If, in exceptional circumstances it is not possible to issue the Skills Action Plan at the end of the session this must be issued within a maximum of five working days and meet security criteria
- 90% of customers will be seen within 10 minutes of a pre-arranged appointment
- Enquiries received by letter will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt, and a full response provided within a maximum of 5 working days

**Web Channel**

- The web channel will be available 97-99% target of the time (with very occasional exceptions where the system needs update or maintenance)
- How easily customers get to their destination i.e. optimum number of clicks will be measured

**National Service Volumes**

23. The following national service volumes have been agreed for each channel of the service.

**Face-to-face**

Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 700,000 individuals</li> <li>■ * These figures are based on the targets for a full financial year</li> </ul>
Interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 1 million interventions</li> <li>■ *These figures are based on the targets for a full financial year</li> </ul>



### Telephone

Telephony	▪ A total of 1 million sessions per year, across information, Language lines and Campaign lines
Call back Requests	▪ Up to 120,000 Call Back Requests from the website
In-depth	▪ Around 100,000 sessions resulting in a skills action plan
Email	▪ 250,000 emails and web form sessions
Forums Moderated	▪ Approximately 2500 posts per year

### Web Channel

Web Sessions	▪ 20 million session *includes a visit and interaction with the web tools and services
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### 13. Operating Instructions: Management information monitoring and reporting arrangements

1. Management Information (MI) is essential to understand how the service is performing and therefore how to improve it. There are two types of MI - Quantitative through supporting technologies and Qualitative through focus interviews/groups and research.
2. Management information is needed for:
  - Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS ) from the Skills Funding Agency to inform strategy development, monitor performance against agreed indicators and to provide advice to Ministers;
  - Skills Funding Agency to monitor and analyse the performance of contractors and inform policy and operational developments and the future specification of services; and
  - Prime Contractors and sub contractors to monitor their own performance to improve customer service and assist with the drive to continuous improvement and high quality service delivery.
  - Department for Work and Pensions. Aggregated reports are provided as well as extracts of records for data matching purposes.
  - Partner Campaigns (currently through the Contact Centre).
3. The aim is for management information across the three delivery channels to be standardised and as compatible as possible. This will allow differences between the 3 channels to be highlighted and to enable performance to be monitored against key performance indicators and impact measures for the service as a whole.
4. Management information will be created through five sources as follows:
  - The reporting capability within CRM (formal and ad hoc reports) for information on performance of Prime Contractors defined in the section on Key Performance Indicators and day to day management.

Formal reports for Prime and Sub Contractor reporting have been created as per requirements gathered from the network. The 'advanced find' and 'report wizard' function of the CRM will allow any additional reports needed.

- ACD (telephone channel) call management system MI, enabling the business to manage performance of the telephone channel.

- Web analytics to measure usage of the Web Channel (including numbers of visits, tool usage, navigation around the site, time spent on site, etc)
  - The Data Service providing MI on Next Step account details
  - Results of independent service evaluation conducted using methods such as focus groups, interviews and post service research.
5. The Skills Funding Agency has commissioned The Data Service to undertake a monthly extract of the CRM data. In time this will be stored as part of their Data Warehouse, but in the short term will be used to create a data 'cube' for analysis purposes. This static, validated information will be used for external reporting to BIS and responding to questions arising.
  6. There is a requirement for Prime Contractors to:
    - provide robust and timely management information on finance, volumes, progress towards national and regional (in the case of face-to-face contractors) KPIs and other required outputs (including Service Level Agreements for the Contact Centre);
    - ensure the accurate and timely collection and input of customer data to the national customer relationship management (CRM) system;
    - ensure tracking systems (which include the CRM) are in place to identify and monitor the impact of the service and performance against national (and regional) KPIs;
    - conduct their own evaluations, provide support and contribute to regional and national evaluations as required;
    - fulfil requirements for the recording of individual users' Unique Learner numbers (face-to-face)
  7. Feedback mechanisms will be confirmed in due course but it is anticipated that there will be a group or network of MI leads and users to work on development of the MI and associated reports, especially with respect to the CRM.
  8. Prime Contractors should also read the following documents in conjunction with these Operating Instructions:
    - CRM Reporting User Guide

## Web Channel

9. The requirements for MI are currently being defined for the Web channel

## 14. Operating Instructions: Data Security

1. Since February 2008 all Government Departments and public bodies have been required to ensure that any personal data that is transmitted (sent by email, sent by post, taken outside of government/public premises) is protected appropriately.
2. It is a requirement that Prime Contractors ensure that they and their sub-contractors have arrangements in place to protect personal information securely that conform to government security standards. All personal data that is transmitted (sent by email, sent by post, the internet or removable media or used and stored in CRM) must be appropriately protected and stored.
3. These Standards are available at:

[http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/csia/assets/dhr/cross\\_gov\\_080625.pdf](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/csia/assets/dhr/cross_gov_080625.pdf)

4. It is a requirement that Prime Contractors ensure that the arrangements comply with any Skills Funding Agency guidance or instruction in relation to Data Security. In addition the Prime Contractor will be required to comply with the data security requirements of Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Ministry of Justice for prison and probation services. This will include having data security agreements in place where appropriate.
5. Where the Prime Contractor is providing services to customers claiming out of work benefits, it must provide data to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions or his nominated representative in accordance with the requirements notified to the Prime Contractor. Failure to transmit complete or accurate data under this clause will constitute a serious breach of contract in accordance with Clause 10 of the General Terms and Conditions of the Contract and may result in payment for this part of the service to be delayed or withheld.

### Personal and Sensitive Data

6. Advisers who have access to **personal** data and **sensitive personal** information (as defined by the Data Protection Act 1998) should be aware of the difference between the two. Personal data includes information such as name, address, date of birth and Sensitive personal data includes information such as disability, ethnic origin or health. Please see paragraphs 10 and 11 below for further details.
7. Advisers must be aware of the sensitivity of the data they have access to and should treat it accordingly by:

- Being aware of those around them who could view the information displayed on screen.
- Not writing down any **personal** or **sensitive** information on paper or similar media where this can be avoided.
- Not saving **sensitive** or **personal** information to their machines or making use of removable media to store **personal** or **sensitive** data where this can be avoided.
- Making sure that where this cannot be avoided the **personal** or **sensitive** data is removed as soon as possible.

### Skills Action Plans

8. Advisers must not include sensitive data in the Skills Action Plan in either the CRM or off-line version. Any sensitive data should only be recorded, where absolutely necessary, either in the Comment box of the CRM or in the drop down box of the CRM where appropriate e.g. ethnic origin.

### Minimum scope of protected personal data

9. The table below sets out the minimum scope of protected personal data. Departments must identify data they or their delivery partners hold whose release or loss could cause harm or distress to individuals. This must include as a minimum all data falling into one or both categories below.
10. Documents, including e mails and Skills Action plans, with any combination of the information below must be Security marked **PROTECT Personal** as set out in paragraph 14.

One or more pieces of information that can be used along with public domain information to identify an individual	combined with	2. information about that individual whose release is likely to cause harm or distress
<p>Name / addresses (home or business or both) / postcode / email / telephone numbers / driving licence number / date of birth</p> <p>[Note that driving licence number is included in this list because it directly yields date of birth and first part of surname]</p>		<p>1. Sensitive personal data as defined by s2 of the Data protection Act, including records relating to the criminal justice records system, and group membership (See paragraph 12 below)</p> <p>2. DNA or finger prints / bank, financial or credit card details / mother's maiden name / National Insurance number / Tax, benefit or pension records / health</p>



	records / employment record / school attendance or records / material relating to social services including child protection and housing
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### **Sensitive personal data**

11. Sensitive Personal data as defined in the Data Protection Act 1998 below should not be included in emails or the Skills Action Plan. Please see paragraph 8 above for information about where any sensitive data should be recorded.
12. Sensitive Personal Data as defined in the Data Protection Act means personal data consisting of information as to -
- The racial or ethnic origin of the data subject, (record in drop down box of Data capture form on CRM)
  - Political opinions,
  - Religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature,
  - Whether the subject is a member of a trade union (within the meaning of the [1992 c. 52.] Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992),
  - Physical or mental health or condition, (any necessary information to go in Comment box of CRM)
  - Sexual life,
  - The commission or alleged commission of any offence, or;
  - Any proceedings for any offence committed or alleged to have been committed, the disposal of such proceedings or the sentence of any court in such proceedings.
13. Particular note should be taken of the requirement that on no account must information relating to Offending or Offences be recorded or shared. Please see Working with offenders section for further details.

### **Operational Security**

14. Advisers should always work on the basis that any personal data in emails, Skills Action Plans or any other recorded information should be kept to the minimum necessary to meet the needs of the customer and the business requirement.



15. Advisers should only access citizens' records when there is a business need to do so.

16. In addition

- Advisers must not share access credentials such as login names or passwords. Logins and passwords should be changed regularly and be configured so that they cannot easily be guessed e.g. Minimum 8 characters, alphanumeric and capitals
- They must inform their line manager if they believe that their credentials have been compromised.
- Unattended equipment must be locked or logged out.

### **Transfer of documents**

17. In summary, but not exclusively, the Prime Contractor must ensure arrangements are in place for handling document transfer between organisations which include:

#### **Marking of documents**

- i. Due to the personal and sensitive data being held that would enable an individual to be identified, documents (including Skills Action Plans) must be SECURITY marked. Print in bold capitals, same size as body text, centre top and bottom of each page (header AND footer) with "PROTECT – PERSONAL"
- ii. Multiple documents for transfer should be double enveloped with the INTERNAL envelope ONLY marked 'PROTECT - PRIVATE'. The name and the address should also be on the internal envelope. No protective labelling to appear on the external envelope.

#### **Internal distribution**

- iii. Documents must be in a double-sealed envelope and sent through internal post or delivered by hand. Both means should be supported by a signature service for the delivery and receipt of documents. A signature service is a daily record of the transfer of numbered packages signed out and in by an officer at an appropriate level in each organisation.

#### **External distribution**

- iv. A signature delivery service such as Royal Mail Special Delivery or trusted courier must be used so that the parcel can be tracked online



from sending to receipt with electronic proof of delivery. Recorded or Registered post is not considered to be secure.

### **Storage**

- v. Information classified as PROTECT should:
  - Not be left unattended (e.g. table, desk or printer)
  - Be stored in a locked cabinet when not in use
  - Not be emailed or transmitted via the internet without the use of encryption as set out below

### **Disposal of papers**

- vi. All material that has been used for protected data should be subject to controlled disposal. Documents must be disposed of sensibly by destroying in a manner to make retrieval or reconstruction unlikely, such as incineration, pulping or shredding.

### **Notified address**

- vii. Under no circumstances should the information be transmitted to any location other than the notified address. For example, if an adviser is delivering Action Plans to a JCP office, the documents must not be taken home overnight. The data can however be scanned on to an encrypted USB stick.

### **Transfer of information over the internet or via email**

- viii. Wherever possible protected personal data should be held and accessed on paper or ICT systems on secure premises.
- ix. The second best option is secure remote access so that data can be viewed or amended without being permanently stored on the remote computer using products that meet the Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) 140-2 standard or equivalent.
- x. The third best option is secured transfer of information to a remote computer on a secure site on which it will be permanently stored. Both the data at rest and the link should be protected at least to the FIPS 140-2 standard or equivalent as above.
- xi. Protectively marked information must not be stored on privately owned computers unless they are protected in this way.

- xii. In all cases, the remote computer should be password protected, configured so that its functionality is minimised to its intended business use only and have up to date software patches and anti virus software.
- xiii. The Skills Funding Agency standard (to meet the FIPS 140-2 standard) is that all documents marked PROTECT require encryption before transmission using Winzip v.9.0 or later and including:
  - Always select the 256 bit Advanced Encryption Standard (256 AES).
  - Always use 15 (or more) characters for the pass phrase
  - The pass phrase MUST NOT be emailed with the encrypted zip
  - The pass phrase must not be communicated to the intended recipient until the sender has verified that the intended recipient has taken safe receipt of the encrypted data
- xiv. Any e mails sent by the adviser to a central processing point must be sent on a daily basis with no more than 15 customers' details sent in one email and be encrypted to the level that we specify in these Operating Instructions.

#### **Transfer of information via removable electronic media**

- xv. Wherever possible, protected personal data should be held and accessed on paper or ICT systems on secure premises. This means organisations should avoid the use of removable media (including laptops, removable disks, CDs, USB memory sticks, PDAs and media card formats).
- xvi. However, where it is not possible to avoid the use of removable media *all* the following conditions must apply:
- xvii. The information transferred to the removable media should be the minimum necessary to achieve the business purpose, both in terms of the numbers of people covered by the information and the scope of information held. Where possible only anonymised information should be held.
- xviii. The removable media should be encrypted to a standard of at least FIPS 140-2 or equivalent (for, example, Winzip 9.0 or later using the 256 bit Advanced Encryption Standard) in addition to being protected by an authentication mechanism, such as a password. In instances



where a password is used it must not be supplied with the data. It must only be disclosed to the intended recipient once they have confirmed safe receipt of the data and positively identified themselves.

- xix. User rights to transfer data to removable media should be carefully considered and strictly limited to ensure that this is provided only where absolutely necessary for business purposes and is subject to monitoring.
- xx. The individual responsible for the removable media should handle it as if it were the equivalent of a large amount of their own cash
- xxi. Electronic media that have been used for protected personal data must be disposed of through secure destruction, overwriting, erasure or degaussing

#### **Identity assurance (ID) /verification for Customer Matching Process (shared secrets)**

18. The following arrangements will apply from the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2010 to assure the identification of individuals when they contact the service.
19. Shared Secrets will NOT be used as a means of identity verification from 1<sup>st</sup> August. As an interim solution from day 1, customers will be verified based on confirmation of 4 pieces of data, using the search functionality within the CRM:
  - Surname
  - First Name
  - Date of Birth
  - Postcode
20. Unless all 4 pieces of data are correctly matched, a new customer record should be created.
21. Shared Secrets will be implemented at a later date, yet to be agreed but potentially 1<sup>st</sup> November 2010. Further information will be supplied in due course.

## 15. Operating Instructions: Quality

1. The service must have consistent and national quality standards which are externally validated and it is a requirement that all providers meet minimum quality requirements for delivery of the service.
2. The key components of the quality assurance arrangements for the telephone, web and face-to-face channels including online email advice and content are:
  - the matrix Standard with external validation by approved assessors; [www.matrixstandard.com](http://www.matrixstandard.com)
  - inspection by OfSTED using the Common Inspection Framework; <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>
  - Ensuring level AA (Double A) conformance to web content accessibility for the web channel

### Minimum requirements

3. All providers delivering the service will need to:
  - hold and retain the matrix Standard; and
  - organisations who have not yet achieved matrix accreditation must obtain a certificate of commitment within three months of the award of a contract and must commit to being fully assessed against the Standard within six months from the commencement of the contract.
4. All sub-contractors of the face-to-face service must have achieved matrix accreditation within six months of the start of their contract.
5. Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel must also abide with the requirements with regards to accreditation of the matrix Standard. The matrix Standard is currently being revised and further information will be provided in due course.
6. Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel must also comply with the Common Inspection Framework. Providers will be inspected between one and four years after securing their contract. This will require Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel to have in place sufficiently robust procedures to demonstrate and evidence organisational competence in the following areas:
  - capacity to improve;
  - outcomes for customers;
  - the quality of provision;



- leadership and management;
  - equality and diversity;
  - safeguarding.
7. An OfSTED inspection that declares the provision 'inadequate' overall or 'satisfactory' overall but inadequate against one or more of the key areas (including Leadership and Management and capacity to improve) will trigger an intervention from the Skills Funding Agency.
8. To support Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel in fulfilling this aim there will be:
- national impact assessments of the service on an annual basis;
  - a national evaluation of the integrated service against the published priority for the service. See Service offer section of these Operating Instructions.
  - an expectation that providers will undertake regional/ local evaluations to establish the effectiveness of approaches and inform service developments.

### **Continual Improvements**

9. It is vital that the service listens regularly to its customers and seeks ways to improve the service it delivers. As well as complying with national workforce standards, and meeting national quality standards, Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel in delivering the service will need to undertake continuous quality improvement as part of core business.
10. Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel must have arrangements in place to gather and act on feedback from both sub-contractors and individual users (including customer satisfaction) on an ongoing basis and Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel are responsible for responding appropriately to the feedback and co-ordinating this activity for the area where they are responsible for delivery.
11. The Telephone channel will gather customer feedback through:
- Immediate transfer of a percentage of customers to a telephone service who will ask the customer questions about their satisfaction with the service they have just received
  - After one month (31 days after last intervention and flagged by CRM) a sample survey of customer satisfaction carried out by telephone by an independent 3<sup>rd</sup> party

12. The service must have a continuous improvement programme, which not only focuses on how the overall service can be improved (based on customer feedback), but also looks at how the operation can run more efficiently: These include:
- Improving customer insight – as a result of providing the service to customers, the service will collect a wealth of data on customers, that should be used to inform service development and continuous improvement
  - Improving efficiency of operation – the service must implement a programme of continuous improvements, to achieve significant efficiencies and improved value for money year on year without compromising the quality of the service
  - Improving outcomes for customers - the service must focus attention on how to improve the outcomes for customers
13. Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel should explore how over time they can operate more productively, identifying how cost can be reduced as a percentage of the service delivery.

### **Performance monitoring arrangements**

14. Assessment of the Prime Contractor and the Contractor for the telephone channel performance and decisions about intervention and continued commissioning of services from providers will be informed by:
- Annual performance against contribution to whole service key performance indicators
  - Annual performance against channel-specific key performance indicators
  - Financial health and financial management and control
  - Inspection outcomes
  - Customer health, safety and welfare

### **The Outcomes of the service**

15. The following tables provide a framework for research and evaluation into progression based on both the hard outcomes, some of which will be measured for performance (See Section on Key Performance Indicators) and soft outcomes which are reflected here. Not all of these outcomes will be captured by the CRM but can contribute to wider research and evaluation of the service overall.



	Potential Outcome	Description
HARD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I'm doing a training course on my way to work</li> <li>I've got a qualification which will help me get a career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The customer has progressed into training that has a work-related outcome</li> <li>The customer has achieved a qualification</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I found a job</li> <li>I started and kept my new job / career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The customer has found employment that offers the opportunity of progression.</li> <li>The customer has successfully applied and remained employed for six months</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I've started/completed learning in work</li> <li>I've got a qualification which will help me advance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The customer has engaged in a training course while maintaining work</li> <li>The customer has achieved a qualification</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I don't need to do anything different at the moment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no specific need to act or change anything at the moment – i.e. the appropriate outcome is to keep doing what the customer is doing at the moment</li> </ul>
SOFT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I feel more confident / more able to progress</li> <li>I have fewer barriers to progression</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The customer feels that they are more confident or more capable of progressing</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuous improvement is a good thing for me</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The customer has an improved attitude towards progression in life</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I won't need as much help next time (I can self-serve)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The customer understands how they can make use of the service (including the ability to self-serve) in future.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I've had a great experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The customer feels that the service they accessed was positive and they received a good experience</li> </ul>

## 16. Operating Instructions: Labour Market Information (LMI)

1. Next Step will operate in a national, regional and local context, delivering a service which responds to individuals' needs and steered by regional priorities (areas, sectors, customer groups) to provide advice in a labour market context informed by high quality, up-to-date labour market information.
2. Key to the delivery of the integrated adult careers service will be the provision of comprehensive, up-to-date and timely national, regional and local labour market information to customers. Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel must demonstrate how Next Step service delivery will be supported by the effective use of up-to-date national, regional and local labour market information.
3. Three tiers of labour market information will exist to support the service:
  - National LMI, including up-to-date data derived from the Sector Skills Councils which will be edited, summarised and presented as 'snapshots' in an adviser-friendly format.
  - Prime contractor - led regional and sub regional LMI will be collated centrally and fed into the web channel.
  - Local LMI will be collated by the subcontractors and fed up to the Prime Contractors
4. Labour market information must reflect principles of equality of opportunity and must be impartial; accessible, up-to-date, robust and relevant to the needs of practitioners in their careers and skills advice work with customers. Recognised research best practice must be used in ensuring appropriate provenance and accuracy of data.
5. The national and regional LMI provided by the SSCs include full publications and bite size versions and the full publications will cover:
  - sector information - a brief description of what the sector covers;
  - information on careers available and new emerging jobs; transferability of skills career paths and opportunities for progression;
  - information on pay rates in the sector;- information on entry requirements, application processes (e.g. Apprenticeships);
  - qualifications: - different types of qualifications needed/acceptable and approved courses (where these exist);
  - data on employment and labour market trends and forecasts;
  - skill shortages;
  - information on opportunities for adults changing career direction;

- information on points of entry or transfer into a sector from another area which would be helpful for inspiring job changers;
- job profiles;
- case studies - including role models and different types of customers making their way in the sector (e.g. women returning to the labour market; graduate entrants, Apprentices etc.); and
- Frequently asked questions.

6. These publications can be found at:

<http://www.advice-resources.co.uk/UsefulInformation/lmi/> - full documents

<http://www.advice-resources.co.uk/UsefulInformation/LMIBitesize/> - small

digestible versions to be used with customers.

7. The information will be regularly updated and will comply with Next Step quality assurance arrangements.

8. This national and regional LMI will be accessible online to advisers and customers. The web LMI offer within Next Step will provide in due course:

- easy navigation, with clear signposting;
- efficient searches both within and across sectors, and links to other sources of relevant information;
- the use of understandable language, which is jargon free;
- print-friendly versions of downloadable documents (including high resolution images of charts); and
- Link to Jobcentre Plus job opportunities site and the National Apprenticeship Service opportunities site.

9. The Prime Contractor and Contractor for the telephone channel must develop links to Sector Skills Councils, Jobcentre Plus and other organisations producing labour market information at a national, regional and sub-regional level to ensure access to up-to-date labour market resources, sector-based careers and skills advice and any available assessment materials.

10. The service, as a whole, will need to work with a range of strategic stakeholders, including, the National Apprenticeship Service and Unionlearn to provide a seamless offer for employees and support for employers wanting to help up-skill their workforce and ensure advisers have the necessary knowledge sharing with those services to help individuals access the support they need.

11. The Prime Contractor for the face to face channel will be responsible for the collection and dissemination of local labour market information, including liaising with the appropriate organisations to ensure that they provide this data and make it available to the web and telephone channels.



12. Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel must ensure that advisers make use of labour market information as part of effective practice when working with customers. They must have arrangements in place to collate and share local and regional knowledge, expertise and labour market information across the other channels of the integrated service.

## 17. Operating Instructions: Workforce Development and Training

### Qualifications

1. The Prime Contractor must ensure that all advisers delivering careers advice as part of the integrated adults careers service hold qualifications appropriate to their role. The Skills Funding Agency will provide further guidance on appropriate qualifications and levels of qualification.
2. All staff appointed or contracted to the service will be expected to have, or be working towards obtaining appropriate qualifications within six months of being appointed, with the expectation that an appropriate qualification be achieved within two years of the commencement of their training course.
3. The Prime Contractor must have in place a staff competency framework, shaped by the sector qualifications strategy for careers advice services, which should include:
  - arrangements to map existing staff competencies against current service needs;
  - plans for continuous professional development, drawing on the workforce development strategy for the adult careers, information, advice and guidance workforce, the CPD Implementation Plan and Career Progression framework produced by Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) [www.lluk.org/career-guidance.htm](http://www.lluk.org/career-guidance.htm)
  - areas of service development where competency requirements will need to be addressed, for example:
    - recent reforms to the Qualification and credit framework (QCF);
    - researching, using and applying labour market information;
    - negotiating with employers around the needs of low-skilled employed adults;
    - developing an individual's employability skills;
    - working with higher skilled people;
    - supporting individuals with multiple barriers to getting on in work and in life;
    - meeting the needs of clients from different ethnic backgrounds;
    - meeting the needs of clients with learning difficulties and/or disabilities;
    - meeting the needs of older clients;
    - using technology in the delivery of services and
    - flexible delivery methods including working with groups

- working with key partner organisations such as Jobcentre Plus and the Probation Service
  - Working with offenders in the community
  - Working with carers
4. The Prime Contractor must support any Skills Funding Agency training plan, and work with the Skills Funding Agency to ensure that it is successfully implemented. The support will include:
    - Ensuring that staff are released to attend appropriate training
    - Providing funding from their training budget to support the participation of staff in nationally agreed training initiatives.
  5. The Prime Contractor must comply with the Skills Funding Agency's national induction scheme and its delivery staff registration scheme through the adviser portal in scope for November 2010 that will include industry best practice and e-learning approaches by:
    - maintaining and sharing a register of new starters and leavers in conjunction with the Skills Funding Agency;
    - maintaining, and sharing with the Skills Funding Agency a register of all staff who require access to the national induction and delivery staff registration scheme;
    - ensuring that the Prime Contractor's in-house induction and staff registration schemes complement and support the national induction and delivery staff registration schemes.
  6. The Prime Contractor must support any national and regional development objectives for improving the competence and capacity of the workforce in future.
  7. This will include employing and supporting apprentices in the delivery of this contract. It is a requirement that the Prime Contractor agrees with the Skills Funding Agency the number of apprentices they will recruit and train during the lifetime of the contract.

## 18. Operating Instructions: Safeguarding vulnerable adults

### Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks

1. Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel must have a policy and strategy in place to safeguard those customers who could be defined as 'vulnerable adults'. The policy should:
  - define customers who may be considered to be vulnerable adults in accord with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006;
  - set out what arrangements are in place to minimise risk;
  - set out how the organisation will take appropriate action to address concerns about the protection of vulnerable adults;
  - outline how customer health and safety will be ensured and;
  - outline provider security and confidentiality arrangements.
  
2. Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel are accountable for ensuring that all staff (whether directly employed or employed by a sub-contractor), involved in the delivery of careers and skills advice services (including non-delivery staff who have access to personal data) are subject to:
  - A satisfactory enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check a minimum of every three years. New staff must be subject to an enhanced satisfactory CRB check within three months of commencing work on the contract.
  - a Baseline (Personnel Security) Standard Check that must include:
    - Verification of identity
    - A nationality and immigration check
    - An employment and history check
    - A declaration of unspent convictions obtained in the form of a 'basic disclosure' certificate obtained via Disclosure Scotland
  
3. The Prime Contractor is accountable for ensuring that all staff (whether directly employed by the Prime Contractor or employed by a sub-contractor) involved in the delivery of high quality careers and advice services (including non-delivery staff that have access to personal data) are registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority<sup>5</sup> as appropriate in 2010 and 2011

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<sup>5</sup> Changes to legislation relating to the Independent Safeguarding Authority are currently under consideration. Further guidance will be issued in due course when it becomes available.

## 19. Operating Instructions: Equality and Diversity

1. The service must comply with all relevant legislation with regards to Equality and Diversity<sup>6</sup>.
2. As well as complying with all relevant legislation, the service should develop strategies to encourage people from the identified priority groups to use the service and meet the specific needs of those users.
3. Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone service should strive to ensure that their workforce is diverse and as far as possible reflect the communities they serve including attracting and serving people from all socio-economic backgrounds.
4. The language used to position, deliver and promote the new service must be appropriate for the communities it is seeking to help and clearly communicate the message of universality. For example, providing advice in a variety of languages and modes of delivery, making sure that services can be understood and used by those with learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as those less familiar with or able to access web-based technology and that older people feel that the service is as much for them as for younger adults.
5. The Prime Contractor should develop professional development strategies for careers advisers to ensure that the information and advice provided challenges stereotypes and gives customers an understanding of non-traditional occupations.
6. Prime Contractors and the Contractor for the telephone channel should also ensure that advisers can support customers to help them overcome occupational segregation and stereotyping, build awareness of flexible working patterns and promote better use of 'lifecycle' skills and qualifications, especially for people returning to the labour market. It must offer support on overcoming barriers preventing individuals from entering learning and work.
7. The Skills Funding Agency will monitor take-up of services and outcomes achieved against equality and diversity measures and Prime Contractors and

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<sup>6</sup> For the purpose of this document the term Equality and Diversity is used as defined in the Equality Act 2010. This defines protected characteristics as: age, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.





the Contractor for the telephone channel must act to improve both take-up and outcomes if necessary.

8. All channels of the service will conform to defined and agreed usability and accessibility standards.
9. The service will provide a language line providing support in a range of community languages. This service will be provided by the Language Team within the Telephone Contact centre. Further details of the language line support available are set out in the Service Offer section of these Operating Instructions.

## 20. Operating Instructions: Budgeting, Funding and Financials

### Budgeting

1. The budget is agreed annually and is set based on the number of individuals the service as a whole is required to reach. The budget will include elements for delivery of services and implementation of each activity set out in the contract.
2. The requirement is for funding to follow the customer, this includes the payment of outcome payments to incentivise contractors to support customers through to the end of the journey and into positive outcomes linked to improving skills, entering employment and progressing within work and life.
3. Economies of scale and efficiencies in management costs and overheads will be sought to ensure that maximum resources are available for frontline delivery.

### Telephone Channel

1. The Contractor will be paid based upon a combination of fixed and variable payments to cover a proportion of the costs of delivering the service along with variable outcome/performance based payments.
2. The detail on the outcome and performance based payments will be based on a mix of customer progression targets into learning and work, improvements in skill levels and customer satisfaction.
3. In the first year of operation, this split will be:
  - 75% fixed cost payments to cover operational costs
  - 25% performance or outcome based funding
4. In subsequent years, this ratio is likely to change toward a higher proportion of outcome/performance payments. Initially the telephone channel should be capable of handling upwards of 1 million telephone sessions per annum and upwards of 250,000 email sessions and have capacity for significant further expansion according to the developing needs of the integrated adult careers service

### Face-to-face Channel

1. The number of individuals expected to be supported through this channel is 700,000 accessing over 1 million sessions.
2. The share of the overall indicative budget and volumes allocated to each Prime Contractor is based on a formula that is a combination of the adult population, the number of low skilled individuals and the number of people on benefit within the region/area of delivery and apportioned between:
  - start-up costs;
  - regional training costs;
  - management costs; and
  - delivery costs

### Start Up costs

3. Start up costs can be claimed between 1 April and 30 September 2010 and used to support the following:
  - IT equipment fully compliant with data security regulations, needed for service delivery;
  - Development of those networks and partnership arrangements that are required to support the delivery of the core service offer.
  - Engagement and promotional materials, posters, leaflets, newsletters.. All additional materials must be agreed with the Skills Funding Agency Learner Communications and Campaigns team before going to print. Please contact [james.miller@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk](mailto:james.miller@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk)
  - Additional activity outside that led by National Office to support the implementation of the new brand. This must be agreed with the regional Skills Funding Agency lead.
  - To fund specifically identified set up costs associated with the implementation of the face-to-face channel of the integrated adult careers service that are agreed in advance with the Skills Funding Agency.
  - Start up costs cannot be used for any payment associated with any TUPE transfer.
  - Claims for payment can be made on submission of a detailed invoice, once an Implementation Plan has been agreed with the Skills Funding Agency.



- Receipts and evidence of claim must be retained for audit purposes.

### **Regional training costs**

4. Regional training costs must cover training associated with the delivery of the contract for all staff including sub-contractors to ensure all staff are competent to deliver this service. This will include:
  - Training and development of existing and new workforce including the recruitment of apprentices.
  - Training to support the implementation of the new service and requirements for its successful operation
  - Continuous professional development for all advisers and delivery staff

### **Management costs**

5. Management costs will cover:
  - Overall administration of contract;
  - Premises and associated costs relating to staff engaged on the contract;
  - Staff costs for all non-delivery staff. TUPE payments cannot be claimed for.
  - Overheads associated with contract management;
  - Management of sub-contractors;
  - Impact analysis and evaluation;
  - Quality assurance including preparation for OfSTED;
  - Quality of skills action plans and customer data.
6. The Skills Funding Agency will look to secure economies of scale and efficiencies in management costs to ensure that maximum resources are available for delivery. The Prime Contractor will provide support to the management costs and training costs of sub-contractors where appropriate.

### **Delivery Costs**

7. Delivery costs may be claimed from 1 August 2010 and cover:
  - Staff costs for the delivery team and outreach support
  - Other overheads in relation to direct delivery;

- Collection of evidence of outcomes
8. All sessions are payable at £40 per individual except in the South East (£43), East of England (£41.50), London (£46.50). Performance will be measured based on the number of individuals that are seen through this contract not the number of sessions delivered to an individual.
  9. Customers from the 08-10 contract may be seen from 1 August 2010 under this contract as if they have not been seen under the previous service.
  10. A maximum of three sessions in one contract year can be claimed for each customer who falls into one or more of the priority groups set out in the Service Offer section of these Operating Instructions but we would expect the customer to be supported until their need is met.
  11. It is expected that the full payment for delivery of the service will be passed on to sub-contractors.

### **Outcome payments**

12. An outcome payment of £20 is payable for individuals entering learning and/or skills, training, sustainable employment defined as 13 weeks or more, increasing earnings through progression in work or a combination of these.

### **Paying for services**

13. In addition, it is recognised that customers outside of the priority groups and therefore not eligible for free face-to-face sessions beyond the initial session may require and want to receive further support following their initial free face-to-face session. They should have the choice of:
  - paying for further face-to-face support (where the contracted provider offers a fee based service with the fee to the individual no more than the equivalent to the funding provided by Skills Funding Agency for each additional session for those in priority groups);
  - accessing further fully-funded support via the telephone channel of the service delivery; or

- using another provider of their choice for further specific, face-to-face support with charges agreed between the individual and the provider.
14. Prime Contractors will be able to inform individuals about other specialist fee-charging services, which may be useful to them. Where a customer chooses to pay for this service outside of the core offer, the fee is paid directly to the service provider. The option to pay for services outside of the core offer only applies to the face-to-face channel. For August 2010, customers will not have the ability to pay for services through the telephone or web Channels.
  15. Further information about how information on paying customers should be recorded will be provided in due course.

## **Evidence**

16. Evidence for payment for advice sessions will be based on the production of a signed Skills Action Plan. There is no requirement for the Data Capture form to be signed.
17. All customers should be treated as new customers from 1 August 2010.

## **Evidence for outcome payments**

18. There will be no requirement to follow up customers after 31 July from the existing contract. Outcome payments relating to anyone seen under this contract will need to be claimed by 31 August 2010.
19. It is a requirement of the service that evidence is supplied to support all claims for payment. Evidence could include: financial records of payment to the sub-contractor; paid invoices; receipts to support the invoice and timesheets to demonstrate the amount of time delivery and non delivery staff spend on the contract.
20. All claims for Outcomes must be evidenced. Only one outcome payment per customer will be paid, though more than one outcome may be recorded on the action plan.
21. Evidence of the customer entering learning and or skills training could include:

- Signed and dated documentary evidence of learning /skills training undertaken from the provider and or employer
22. Evidence of sustainable employment which is defined as being in employment for a minimum of 13 weeks and could include:
- Copy of payslip signed by the customer after 13 weeks of continuous employment
  - Documentary signed evidence from the employer on letter head or similar confirming customer in post for minimum of 13 weeks
  - Copies of correspondence between employer and customer such as a job offer or contract of employment
23. Evidence of increasing earnings through progression in work could include:
- Copy of a letter from the employer to customer indicating an increase.
  - Copy of payslips showing such increase signed by customer
24. Evidence for the regional KPIs is to be agreed in writing with the regional lead for the contract prior to 1 August 2010.
25. The Prime Contractor is able to work with their regional contractor for the Careers Information and Advice Service (CIAS) for offenders to ensure that the customer has access to the Next Step service on completion of their sentence. However as the CIAS provider is paid for a pre-release interview, the Prime Contractor must ensure that any claim regarding these customers must relate to work after they have left their establishment.
26. CRM requirements for the entering of data and Skills Action Plans are to be adhered to for all customers.
27. Invoices are to be submitted by the fifth working day of each month to comply with Skills Funding Agency practices for all contracts. Payment will be made on receipt of the appropriate itemised invoice of actual costs paid monthly in arrears when the relevant evidence has been supplied. The Prime Contractor is responsible for ensuring the sub-contractors supply the relevant evidence.

## 21. Next Step Operating Instructions: Terminology

Term	Description / Notes
Achievement	Customers' take-up of education, training or employment.
Activity	Some form of interaction has taken place with the customer. Please see Appendix B for details of how an activity is recorded in the CRM.
Advice/Careers Advice	Usually a longer and more in-depth interaction than the giving of information. It may be spontaneous or pre-arranged, and may be offered on an individual or group basis, via face to face or contact centre advisers. Avoid careers guidance.
Adviser/Careers Adviser	Those employed directly by the Prime Contractor, Contractor for the Telephone channel or sub contractor to give information and/or advice on careers and skills. This activity may form all or part of their usual work roles and covers all channels in the service. Always to be written as adviser, avoid advisor. Please note just the term adviser can be used if used in context with careers e.g. 'Book now for a careers advice session. Your adviser will help you to.....'
Age range of services	The service is available to all adults in England. Any adult aged 19 and over (or 18 and over for Jobcentre Plus customers or those in custody) will be able to receive personalised help and support.
At a distance from the labour market	Adults who are not in receipt of benefits but who are not working and who are interested in returning to the labour market.
Barriers to participation	Personal or practical barriers which hinder a customer's ability or willingness to participate in education, training or employment.
Booked appointment	An appointment booked by the customer or by the JCP adviser or Next Step adviser.
Call me service	The facility to request a call back from an adviser via the website. If used in mid sentence in web copy all lower case.
Capability and Tools	The web capabilities (e.g. to build a CV) which the service will provide to support the delivery of skills-based advice.
Carer	A carer spends a significant proportion of their life providing unpaid support to family or potentially friends.



	This could be caring for a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems.” This definition is subject to review and consultation by the Dept of Health.
Complementary support services	Agencies offering specialist support, for example in counselling, housing assistance or debt management to which contractors or subcontractors refer customers.
Common Inspection Framework	The inspection framework for all publicly funded learning provision administered by the Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED).
Contact Centre	The contact centre is run by the Contractor that provides information and advice via the telephone, email and forums. Avoid using the terms call centre, advice line, helpline.
(Next Step) Course Directory	Customers wishing to engage in learning are able to search for the course which is right for them through the use of the new Next Step Course Directory, which will support them in making the decisions which are right for them. If used in web copy it is possible to also use the course directory.
Course search	The facility to search for a course via the course directory available on the web channel. If used in web copy in mid sentence use course search. Avoid Course Search.
Customer	An individual who accesses the service. Not citizen, caller, client or enquirer. Please see Appendix B for details of how a customer is recorded in the CRM.
Customer Experience	What a customer hears, sees and feels when interacting with the service. Linked to the Customer Experience Framework which describes how the service provides a blend of capability and tools to personalise the interaction based on the customer profile and needs. See Service Standards.
Customer Need	A customer want or need and the fulfilment of that need, which enables us to understand how the service will respond. The customer’s experience differs depending on the customer profile and the desired outcome.
Customer Profiles	Attributes (personal data e.g. age, characteristics e.g. skill level and attitude) to describe the customer and allow us to personalise the service they receive based on who they are.
Customer Relationship	A solution which enables a single view of the customer across the channels, enabling the capture of contact

Management System (CRM)	history and the management of Skills Action Plans.
Economically inactive	Of working age and not employed, not claiming benefits, not self employed, not actively seeking work or in full or part-time education.
Ethnic minorities	A group that has different national or cultural traditions from the majority of the population and who may be at a disadvantage because they are given unequal treatment.
Email an adviser	The facility to email an adviser via the website. If used in mid sentence in web copy all lower case.
Employment, Employees , Self-employed, Employed and Unemployed	<p><b>Employment:</b> The total number of employees, self-employed, participants in government training schemes, and people doing unpaid family work.</p> <p><b>Employees:</b> Those who work for an employer under the terms of a contract of employment, whether it is written down, agreed orally or implied by the nature of the relationship.</p> <p><b>Self-employed:</b> Earning one's livelihood directly from one's own trade or business rather than as an employee of another</p> <p><b>Employed:</b> In full time, part time paid work or self employment.</p> <p><b>Registered Unemployed:</b> In receipt of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) or Employment and Skills Allowance (ESA).</p>
External organisations	Funding bodies, other providers and other organisations with which providers or contractors interact for the benefit of customers, other users and the adult careers service.
Face-to-face (channel)	The face-to-face channel consisting of advisers in a range of locations across England. Use hyphens. Never abbreviate f2f or similar. Face-to-face advice but advice face to face.
Facing redundancy	A customer who has either received notice of redundancy or has concerns that they are in danger of being made redundant.
Follow up	The formal follow up process is when customers are contacted for customer service purposes and to find out if they have entered learning, training or work. Follow up will commence after one month of inactivity of the customer from the date of the last advice session and then a further two months after that.
Full time education	Learning which is 16 hours or more per week.
Guiding Principles	A defined set of 'rules' that will shape how the service is

	designed and delivered.
information	The provision of information about learning or work.
Informed Consent	TBC
Integrated Employment and Skills offer (IES)	A joint DWP, SFA and BIS initiative to more closely align the provision of skills to the ability to progress in work.
Interaction	A single touch point or experience between a customer and the service
Intervention	An enquiry, case or problem for which the customer has requested support from the Next step service. Please see Appendix B for details of how an intervention is recorded in the CRM.
Jobcentre Plus	Jobcentre Plus is a government agency supporting people of working age from welfare into work, and helping employers to fill their vacancies. Avoid JobCentre Plus or JCP
Key Performance Indicators and Impact Measures	A set of measures that demonstrate the achievement of the service against defined National Targets.
Labour Market Information (LMI)	National, regional and local information and analysis about current and future labour markets. In copy use labour market information but if abbreviated use LMI.
Language lines	The provision of information and advice in eight languages; Gujarati, Punjabi, Sylheti, Urdu, Farsi, Polish, French, and Somali. In copy use language lines mid sentence. Avoid minority language service.
Length of unemployment	This is classified into the following headings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- less than 6 months</li> <li>- 6 – 11 months</li> <li>- 12 – 23 months</li> <li>- 24 – 35 months</li> <li>- over 36 months</li> <li>- not known/not provided.</li> </ul>
Low skilled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- adults who lack a level 2 qualification and/or will be in low skilled, low prospects jobs</li> <li>- adults who experience barriers within the labour market;</li> <li>- adults lacking 'employability' skills and those needing more in depth support to enable them to progress into training or sustainable employment.</li> </ul>
Matrix Standard	The required quality standard for all providers offering funded careers skills and advice services.
Methods of follow up	This can be conducted via telephone, e-mail, face to face, letter, or text/SMS for all service offers.

Next Step personal online space	Formerly Skills Accounts. Part of the Next Step customer website where the customer registers to access information and tools to help them progress in life and work.
OLASS	Offender Learning & Skills Service (Not in scope currently but will come into scope beyond).
Outcome Focussed (as described in the Guiding Principles)	A focus to ensure that every interaction has a clearly communicated outcome which will support customers in progressing in work and life.
Outcome payment	An outcome payment that is payable when individuals enter learning and/or skills training or sustainable employment. For face-to-face prime contractors documentary evidence is required to claim the outcome payment.
Part-time education	Learning which is below 16 hours per week.
Personalised	Based on the Customer Experience Framework the service will use a blend of capability and tools to provide an appropriate outcome based on the customer profile and needs.
Positive outcome	Advisers work with customers to ensure that they achieve one of the following: (a) enter learning or training (b) progress in work or (c) move into sustainable employment (see definition below).
Prior qualification level	Entry level Other qualifications below level 1 Levels 1 through to 8 Other qualifications Not known/not provided No qualifications.
Priority Groups	Priority groups identified for Next Step: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low skills adults(without a level 2 qualification), especially women locked in low skilled, low prospects jobs</li> <li>- young adults aged 19 - 24 without a level 3 qualification</li> <li>- adults facing redundancy, newly redundant or at a distance from the labour market</li> <li>- Adults aged 50 plus</li> <li>- Jobcentre Plus customers in receipt of out of work benefits</li> <li>- people with learning difficulties or disabilities (including those with mental health issues)</li> <li>- offenders in custody and in the community under the supervision of probation services and ex offenders</li> <li>- people from ethnic minority communities</li> </ul>

	- carers as defined by Department of Health guidelines.(See carer above)
Prime Contractor	The contract holder responsible for the delivery of the careers and skills information and advice offer. The term Prime Contractor includes the contractor leading on the delivery for the contact centre.
Process	A series of steps/activities to document a workflow and derive an appropriate outcome.
Progression	A customer moving forwards in work and life either by finding employment, receiving training or progressing in their existing job.
Provision	A specific type of activity. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- programmes for the unemployed</li> <li>- Apprenticeships</li> <li>- Informal Adult Learning (IAL) non accredited learning</li> <li>- Further Education (FE)</li> <li>- Jobcentre Plus funded provision</li> <li>- Learndirect provision</li> <li>- Higher Education (HE)</li> <li>- UnionLearn.</li> </ul>
QCF (Qualifications and Credit Framework)	A framework which breaks all qualifications into manageable units and credits which are recognised by providers, learners and employers.
Qualification level – Entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Entry level certificates</li> <li>- Skills for Life at entry level.</li> </ul>
Qualification level – 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GCSEs grades D-G</li> <li>- BTEC Introductory Diplomas and Certificates</li> <li>- OCR Nationals</li> <li>- Key Skills level 1</li> <li>- NVQs</li> <li>- Skills for Life.</li> </ul>
Qualification level – 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5 GCSEs grades A*-C</li> <li>- BTEC First Diplomas and Certificates</li> <li>- OCR Nationals</li> <li>- Key Skills level 2</li> <li>- NVQs</li> <li>- Skills for Life.</li> </ul>
Qualification level – 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A levels</li> <li>- Advanced Extension Awards</li> <li>- GCE in applied subjects</li> <li>- International Baccalaureate</li> <li>- Key Skills level 3</li> <li>- NVQs</li> <li>- BTEC Diplomas, Certificates and Awards</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- BTEC Nationals</li> <li>- OCR Nationals.</li> </ul>
Qualification level – 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Key Skills level 4</li> <li>- NVQs</li> <li>- BTEC Professional Diplomas, Certificates and Awards</li> <li>- 1st year BA degree.</li> </ul>
Qualification level – 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HNCs and HNDs</li> <li>- NVQs</li> <li>- BTEC Professional Diplomas, Certificates and Awards</li> <li>- 2nd year BA degree.</li> </ul>
Qualification level – 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Diploma in Professional Production Skills</li> <li>- BTEC Advanced Professional Diplomas, Certificates and Awards</li> <li>- 3rd year BA degree.</li> </ul>
Qualification level – 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diploma in Translation</li> <li>- BTEC Advanced Professional Diplomas, Certificates and Awards</li> <li>- Masters degree.</li> </ul>
Qualification level – 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Specialist Awards</li> <li>- PhD.</li> </ul>
Referral to or from	A formal process takes place when a customer is referred to or from one organisation to another with a booked appointment, e.g. to Jobcentre Plus. To support the referral there will be a sharing of customer information.
Scenario	A specific example used to test the customer experience by providing a “real-life” sequence of events.
Service Level	A service level is a measurement of performance which relates specifically to a channel or region.
Service Standards	A document which sets out from a customer perspective what they want from the service and then demonstrates and measures how we will deliver this to them.
Session	This can be a completed activity with a face-to face adviser or an interaction between a customer and adviser at the contact centre. Please see Appendix B for details of how a session is recorded in the CRM.
Signposting to or from	This is a less formal process than a referral. A customer is told or given a leaflet about the service or another organisation that could help i.e. if specialist advice is required.
Skills Action Plan	A written record of an interaction which lists the main points discussed and the actions which the customer and the adviser have agreed to carry out. This will be recorded in the CRM. . If used in mid sentence in web copy all

	lower case. Can also be referred to as action plan (lower case).
Skills Health Check	TO BE USED FROM THE LAUNCH OF THE NEW WEBSITE ONWARDS. This is a universal skills diagnostic tool designed to provide a coherent and flexible approach to skills assessment and personal action planning. The outcome of the assessment is a report which a customer could act on by themselves or go onto discuss the report with an adviser. In web content use skills health check to describe the process and skills health check tool when referring directly to the tool.
Soft outcomes	Soft outcomes refer to achievements for a customer which aren't measurable, such as increased confidence, self-awareness and motivation, the ability to overcome barriers to participation, the identification of clear goals, and knowledge of opportunities and sources of support.
Sub contractor	Agencies formally contracted to the Prime Contractor to deliver the service on their behalf.
Sustainable employment	Employment of a minimum of 13 weeks duration is required for Face to Face outcome payment for sustainable employment. The Jobcentre Plus definition is staying in work for 6 months, i.e. for individuals to leave, and remain off benefits, for 6 months or more.
Telephone (channel)	The telephone channel delivered by advisers in two locations; Manchester and Leicester.
Transfer	This relates to the internal handover of a customer between the three service channels.
Universal Service	The universal service describes the core offer (Information, support and advice to support progression in work and life) of the service which is available to all adults within England.
Vision	The vision is articulated as "Our vision is for millions of people to enjoy more rewarding lives. We want to create a culture where career development and acquiring new skills is the norm. This will improve individuals' lives, society as a whole and in turn increase productivity and boost the economy."
Web (channel)	The web channel for the service comprises the customer website (i.e. the virtual adviser) with a range of tools and capabilities to support advisers and customers.
Workforce	Ensuring that the workforce has the skills and capabilities

Development	required to deliver the service both for Destination 1 and beyond.
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Additional words/terms for web copy

Term	Description / Notes
£30 a week	Not £30 per week
A level	Not A-level or A Level
Academic	Consider whether 'theoretical' would get the point across better in the context
Adult Certificates for Numeracy and Literacy	NOT: National Certificates, National Tests, Online Tests. NOT: Adult certificates for numeracy and literacy
Assetskills	
Apprenticeship	Always capitalised. But apprentice or apprentices would be lower case
Automotive Skills	
Collective nouns	Next Step is singular. Next Step has introduced a new action plan.....'
Computer	Avoid PC
Courses	Avoid 'products' and 'learning materials'
CV builder	Not CV Builder
Directgov	Not Direct Gov, DirectGov
Distance learning	Refer to home study/self-study
e-learning	Always lower case except at the beginning of a sentence
email	Not e-mail or Email
Fees waived/fee remission	Use 'get your fees paid'
GCSE	Not G.C.S.E.
Health Learning and Skills advice	



line	
higher education and further education	General terms – all lower case
Industry-recognised	Not ‘accredited’
internet	Always lower case <b>unless at the start of a sentence</b> . Avoid web <b>unless in relation to the web channel</b> .
italics	Use for titles of publications Guide to employment rights. (Note: do not use quotation marks as well)
job profiles	Always lower case except at beginning of a sentence
learning opportunities	May be used instead of courses
learning provider	Instead of educational establishment
Level 2 qualification	Not level two qualification
Mature students	Use older students
Next Step	If referring to the brand. Upper case N and S and space in between words – Next Step
next step	Used as part of a sentence e.g. ‘we can help you take your next step’. Never nextstep.
NHS Careers	
offers / offer	SEMTA offers information and advice
on-the-job	Hyphenated on-the-job training but training on the job
one-to-one	Hyphenated
online	Not ‘online’
Over 50s	Use older people/workers/learners
part-time and full-time	Hyphenated
‘Personal circumstances’, when describing domestic commitments	Also use ‘financial circumstances’ to describe financial position. Better than ‘situation’
Podcast	Not audio file

Professional and Career Development Loan	Not Career Development Loan
Sector	Too business-like; use industry, field or nothing at all, eg in financial services....
Sector Skills Council	Never SSC.
Self-employed	Hyphenated
self-study	Hyphenated
SEMTA	Not Semta
Skills for life	Not basic skills, essential skills
SkillsActive	Not Skillsactive, Skills Active
Skillset Careers	Not SkillSet Careers, Skillset careers
Skillsmart Retail	Not SkillsSmart Retail, Skillsmart retail
Strengths	Not aptitudes, abilities or talents
SummitSkills	Not Summit Skills, Summitskills
Subject names	Course subjects in lower case, apart from English, which is a proper noun. General terms, such as university courses in engineering, in lower case too; unless talking about a specific course of a specific university such as Biochemistry at Durham University.
Titles of official schemes and initiatives – e.g. Adult Learning Grant, Professional and Career Development Loans	Always capitalised
UK online centre (s)	NOT: UK online Centres or UK online
Vocational	‘Practical’ or ‘work-related’ would get the point across better in the context
Volunteering	Not voluntary work
0800 100 900	Note spaces and bold.

## Legacy terms - NOT TO BE USED

Term	Description / Notes
Advice line	Use telephone channel/contact centre as appropriate or in web copy avoid using any descriptor and for example say 'Call us...' or 'Call an adviser...'
Careers coach	Use adviser/careers adviser
Differentiated and Personalised (DAPS)	Use advice session
Guidance/careers guidance	Use advice/careers advice
Helpline	Use telephone channel/contact centre as appropriate or in web copy avoid using any descriptor and for example say 'Call us...' or 'Call an adviser...'
Information adviser	Use adviser/careers adviser
Learning adviser	Use adviser/careers adviser
Minority language service	Use Language lines/language service
National Directory of Learning Providers and Provision (NDLPP)	Use Next Step course directory.
Skills Accounts	Use Next Step personal online space
Skills diagnostic tool	Use 'skills health check tool' refer to the process as a 'skills health check'



## **Operating Instructions: Terminology**

### **Appendix B**

#### **Definitions relating to the Customer Relationship Management system**

##### **Activity:**

Is used to record the fact that some form of interaction has taken place with the customer. An Activity record within CRM can be seen as a “Phone Call”, “Email”, “Task”, “Service Activity”, “Letter” or “Fax”. For example, if ‘Joe Bloggs’ were to call the contact centre about his intervention “Getting back into work” (as described above), a new “Phone Call” activity would be created within CRM which is linked to the original Intervention record. If Joe then gets referred to the face to face team, then a “Service Activity” would need to get created which has a service type of “Face to Face Appointment”, outlining the start and end time of the appointment and which adviser he will be seeing.

##### **Customer:**

An individual who accesses the service.

This is recorded as a Contact within the CRM system and describes the details held about an individual including contact details, address details and demographics. This is a container for all other records within the CRM System specific to this person.

##### **Intervention:**

A problem, enquiry or case for which a customer has requested support from the Next Step service. This is recorded as an Intervention within the CRM System. A customer could have many Intervention records open at one point in time relating to each different issue they may have, however, most of the time they will have only one. For example, an intervention could be created within CRM to record the fact that “Joe Bloggs” is looking to get back into full time employment after being unemployed for 18 months. This intervention could remain open indefinitely as the adviser may never find out if and when Joe Bloggs gets back into work.

Interventions will **not** be used for counting customers and customer sessions, they are used to understand why a customer is contacting the service and manage them through the service.

##### **Session (Face to Face):**

Is a completed activity with a face to face adviser. In CRM, this is recorded as a Service Activity of type “Face to Face Appointment”. In order to be paid for, the Service Activity must be marked as “Completed” within the CRM system.

##### **Session (Telephone - Information):**

Is an interaction between a customer and a first (information) tier adviser at the contact centre. This is recorded in the CRM as a phone call activity.



**Session (Telephone - Advice):**

Is an interaction with a second (advice) tier) adviser at the contact centre with an associated action plan. This could be recorded within CRM as a phone call activity, if the call is transferred immediately OR as a service activity of type 'careers coach call back' if a call back is scheduled.